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ON

THE AUTHORITY OF MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL:

AN ESSAY, READ TO A FRIENDLY ASSOCIATION OF MINISTERS,
AND INSERTED AT THEIR REQUEST.

As every office is appointed with a view to duties that are to be discharged, so it must be invested with authority adequate to the responsibility and obligations it imposes. In an office, therefore, such as the ministry of the gospel, which involves duties and responsibilities so awful, there must reside proportionate and sufficient authority; and it must be, equally to christian ministers and their people, a point of great interest and moment to ascertain the nature, extent, and legitimate exercise of that authority. For an enlightened and faithful minister can desire to know and sustain his authority only in order to his own fidelity, the honour of his Master, and the good of his charge; while a people duly impressed with a sense of the divine, supreme authority of the Great Master, will be desirous to honour every delegation of it, as expressed in his word, or confided to his ministers. And as it is certain no human society, whether organized for civil or sacred purposes, can prosper, in which the authority of the rulers and the privileges of the people are not mutually respected; in the church of Christ it is of the highest moment that the ministers encroach not on the rights of the people, nor the people on the jurisdiction of the ministers.

The original source or fountain of the authority, be it what it may, with which christian ministers are invested, must be the will and appointment of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the only sovereign head and Lord of the Church, which is his by a most divine and perfect right, as redeemed by his blood, and as given into his hand by his heavenly Father. He is sole, supreme, and absolute king in Zion. And it is a presumptuous and intolerable usurpation, when any human power dares to arrogate to itself, and to confer on others, of its own authority, any office, title, or authority in his church, not expressly appointed by him. And this sole and immediate derivation from Christ, of ministerial office and authority in the christian

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church, so far from rendering it feeble, doubtful, or ineffectual to its proper ends; on the contrary, makes it sacred and binding on conscience, and brings both ministers and people, in respect of it, under a direct and solemn responsibility to the Great Redeemer and Judge. Whatever authority christian ministers possess, they hold it '*jure divino*,' or they have none at all. If any exercise in the church an authority which Christ gave them not, it is a usurpation. The church itself has no existence but from him; and he that is absolute creator must have absolute dominion over his own work. If, therefore, there were indeed any now empowered to make new laws, and additional officers and regulations in the church, they could have that power only by delegation and appointment from the Lord Jesus. Nothing is then more clear, than, that if there be in the hands of a christian minister any authority, he derives it from the only Lord and Master, Christ Jesus.

It must be equally apparent, that the authority of christian ministers must be exclusively scriptural; they must be invested with it by warrant of the New Testament. The mind and will of Christ is made known to his church by no medium but scripture. Nothing is left to human discretion, nothing to human reason, save only the office of correctly interpreting, with divine help, the sacred oracles. All titles, offices, powers assumed by any professing to be Christ's ministers, not derived from the instructions of Christ and his apostles, are therefore invalid and usurped.

The authority of christian ministers must be purely and wholly spiritual. Its origin, nature, and purposes are all spiritual. It does not affect men's temporal interests, but their consciences, their christian graces and duties, and the salvation of their souls. The whole labour and duty of a christian minister is in the church, among the professed disciples of the Saviour; and where his duty and labour is, there, and there only, is his authority. It extends not to the bodies, or property, or liberty of men; is not armed with secular coercion and punishments; can employ legitimately no weapons but the word, ordinances, and instituted discipline of the gospel. And though in this view, to the judgment of the world, the authority of a christian minister may seem no authority, may seem wanting in sanction and force, because it can inflict no carnal, secular penalties, employ no terrors of the magistrate's sword; yet in truth, for its own proper purposes of administering the laws and blessings of Christ's kingdom, for ruling and benefiting his subjects, this authority is therefore venerable, and its sanctions appropriate, because they are altogether spiritual; and the seeming force and power obtained from carnal weapons altogether enervates and amuls it, and renders it entirely unfit to act on consciences and govern souls.

The authority of christian ministers is again strictly and only executive: there are no legislative functions confided to them, and therefore no discretionary power to make, or alter, or repeal laws in the church of God. In proof of this it is enough to say, that no man can pretend, with any show of reason, to make laws for the church, without an express warrant and charge to do so. But the

New Testament certainly empowers no uninspired men to make laws for Christ's church. This is so sure, that to assert it is quite sufficient. Neither is there the slightest pretence that any man ever was employed to give laws in the church, except under an immediate inspiration from God. All those honoured servants of heaven, from Moses to Paul, exhibited miraculous proof that they were commissioned of God, and then gave forth, not their own conclusions and regulations, but his oracles and sacred ordinances. But to the standing ministry of the church is confided nothing more than the faithful administration of its affairs, upon rules laid down in scripture, and by means furnished there. The doctrines to be preached, the ordinances to be administered, and the discipline to be enforced, are all contained in the New Testament. And the whole authority of a christian minister depends on his requiring nothing, employing nothing that is not scriptural. Engaged in his holy office to carry into effect the requirements of the word of God, he has the sanction of Christ, and is borne out by his authority; but attempting to obtrude on the disciples of the Saviour, what he has not enjoined, he has no hold on their consciences: they are under duty to Christ to resist, not to obey, that unauthorised dictation.

As the authority of the christian ministry, whatever it may be, can, in fact, be possessed only by those who are legitimately invested with that office, it may be necessary to a complete view of our subject, that we should briefly inquire what constitutes a scriptural call to this sacred service, and establishment in it. In truth, a valid institution into the ministry of the Gospel must originate with the Great Master himself: none but he can determine who shall serve him in this great work, or communicate adequate qualifications, or give a lawful appointment to it. But as inspiration has ceased, and men are not now sent forth into the sacred ministry by any miraculous call, but in the ordinary course of gracious and providential arrangements, a personal call to the ministry of the word must be judged of in accordance therewith. And as the church is an organized society of christian men, the Saviour effects, through that instrumentality, the regular and safe introduction of good men into the ministerial office; not leaving the determination of so weighty a matter to the private and personal will of the individuals themselves, who may, on whatever grounds, desire the work of a bishop. Three things on the part of the Great Head of the church, and as immediately from him, seem essentially necessary, as an indication of his will, that any of his disciples should serve him in the public ministry of the word;—that is, all these three things must concur and meet in any individual to designate him as intended of Christ for this work. Qualifications, natural and gracious: sincere piety, and not only competent, but appropriate abilities. Next the spirit of the work. an impulse of the soul to it, a deep sense of duty to undertake it, a real love to the employ. And providential openings, and disposal of circumstances to secure a regular and clear admission to the office. But then, as before observed, these things are not left to private interpretation; the judgment of others is to be consulted, and their sanction obtained. Especially those already in the minis-

try are under charge to attend to the succession of others in the sacred work, and are, therefore, equally under duty and authority, both to prevent improper persons from intruding into it, and to seek out, encourage, and advance suitable characters for it. The voice of the church may, with great propriety, be consulted. But, as a proper distribution of the duty of ministers and churches, in the introduction of the younger brethren into the sacred office, it would seem that it is the part especially of ministers to judge of the qualifications and call of candidates to the ministry generally, in the first instance, and to oversee and provide for their suitable training for it; and then of the people to judge whether they will sanction and confirm what has proceeded thus far, by accepting to the ministerial and pastoral work among them, those who have had the countenance of other pastors in becoming candidates, and obtaining education for the work. And, indeed, he who is conscious to himself of upright and holy motives in entering on this great calling; whose qualifications and spirit have been approved by wise and faithful elders; and who has obtained from Christ that favour among the christian people to whom he has opened his probationary ministry, that they receive him to be their pastor with unanimous love and joy, may calmly and satisfactorily conclude, Jesus hath counted him faithful, putting him into the ministry; and that the authority of a christian minister rests on him, not as usurped, but as committed to him from him that called him, that he may be thoroughly furnished for his work and make full proof of it. While in any young and zealous Christian, desirous to engage in the gospel ministry, a contempt or disregard of the advice and countenance of other ministers and Christians, on so momentous a design, would betray dispositions in themselves almost conclusive proof that he was intruding himself uncalled and unauthorized to the service of God's altar: only ignorance, conceit, self-will, inadequate views of the awfulness of sacred office, could lead to such conduct. Not that there is, therefore, no remedy in cases where, from the general corruption of the church, and decay of piety, ministers and people would concur together, in thrusting away from the regular avenues of approach to the pulpit, every youth of sound doctrinal views, fervent piety, and devoted zeal; accounting the best qualifications for the sacred work with which his Divine Master had endowed him, the strongest reasons for their hostility and rejection. In such cases, in all cases, where the great interests of piety and truth can only be vindicated by departure from ordinary forms and modes of procedure, the word of God is not bound to them; they must not, by scrupulous and superstitious adherence to them, be allowed permanently to obstruct and hinder the very ends they were instituted to promote. And God will give a call and a seal to what may seem the irregular recommencements of his own work, which, once revived into life and power, will again adjust itself to salutary and restored order. The churches which have originated in zealous and holy efforts for truth and piety, though upbraided for their irregular origin, and cut off from an orderly course of succession, by the corrupt and persecuting communities against whose errors they bear

their protest, may rest satisfied in the approval of him who prefers obedience to sacrifice, and substance to form. Nor can it be imagined that any precise modes of introduction into the ministry are so essential, as that whoever departs from them in his entrance upon the office, therefore invalidates his whole ministerial call and administrations. The episcopalian, presbyterian, and congregational modes cannot be all exactly or equally scriptural: but surely it is not to be imagined that any one of those bodies has so fatally erred in its mode of induction to the sacred ministry, as to have rendered it impossible that, under its forms, the Saviour should call forth into service pastors of his own choice and approval. And if not, then must it be regarded as a most deplorable departure from enlightened charity and spiritual views of Christ's kingdom, in those who limit valid ordination to one form, and make ministerial character depend on ordination, which is, indeed, a solemn, appropriate, scriptural service for giving public expression to the concurrent sanction of ministers and Christians to the entrance of a pastor in his public work; but still valuable to him, and to the general cause of piety, just in proportion as it is conducted with faith, love, truth, and zeal; even in this case the spirit far more than the form giving validity to the transaction. But to make the blessing of Christ, the promise of the Spirit, and the validity of a ministry, all dependant on a form, instead of holding that where the truth and power of godliness are, there errors in form will be forgiven by the Great Master, and therefore ought to be considered quite subordinate by us, is utterly to Judaize, and to subject the church again to the old yoke of ceremonies, our freedom from which is no mean article in the charter of our gospel liberty.

This is not advanced to make light of the Saviour's institutions, even in their most subordinate details; or to justify known departure from his will, or neglect to ascertain it, in any instance; or to represent all the various modes adopted among Christians as matters entirely indifferent in themselves, and to be regarded by us with equal approval. By no means. Charity and forbearance towards what we deem the minor errors of our brethren, is not approbation of them. Communion on the ground of agreement in great things, is no sanction of what are mutually deemed deviations from truth on lesser points. But this principle of communion with Christians, notwithstanding ritual and ecclesiastical differences, is essential, if there is to be any fellowship without perfect outward uniformity. For the congregationalist may deem himself to have as valid and scriptural objections to episcopalian ordination, as those of that communion can entertain against his mode of induction into the christian ministry. He may think mere parental designation, without evidence of personal piety, in the first instance; a slight examination as to creed, morals, and learning before ordination; and a presentment to cure of souls, by the sole authority of a patron, with no appeal at any stage to the judgment of a christian people, as defective and unscriptural a call to the sacred office, as his episcopalian brother can consider his introduction to it for want of the supposed apostolic succession. What is to be done? To forbear and commune. For

does not the Great Master himself interpose to check and rebuke mutual exclusion and alienation on this account, by making it plain before our eyes, that by both modes he introduces into a useful and honourable ministry, many men of character, usefulness, and divine approbation so equal, as to prove that however much either or both denominations have erred in this matter from his institutions, neither have forfeited altogether his promised presence and blessing; and that, therefore, neither ought to condemn, unchurch, and excommunicate the other.

And as in our brotherly forbearing communion with christian ministers and churches from whom we differ in ecclesiastical polity, so in order to satisfaction with our own ministerial character and authority, it is necessary to lay the main stress of its validity on great principles rather than on any circumstances or accuracy of forms. For if a christian minister can never be satisfied of his regular, valid introduction into his sacred office, till he has the same precise and sure knowledge of every form that should be observed for that purpose, as might be obtained, and was necessary to the due consecration of a Jewish priest, that satisfaction is now utterly unattainable. But if it be deemed sufficient that every man be clearly satisfied he is following the mind of Christ, which he has diligently sought for in the divine word, and that as such sincere inquirers will be preserved from fatal or serious error as to personal duty or salvation, so also equally from such injurious mistakes in the formation and government of churches, in the call and ordination of ministers, as would invalidate their character and forfeit the Saviour's approval and blessing, on this ground we have satisfaction for ourselves and charity for others; we see how both they and we may partake in the smile and presence of the Great Master; we have a rule of judgment in harmony with the liberty of the gospel, with the genius of a spiritual, not a ritual dispensation. We may prefer our own modes under a persuasion of their accordance with scripture, and be satisfied that, whether as shepherds, or as sheep, we have entered into the fold by the door, and have not climbed over the sacred inclosure with fraud or violence as thieves and robbers; and yet recognize as brethren those who have entered by the same great portal, though with some variation of course and manner. The great law is, "let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind," as to truth and duty on subordinate points; and then bear with his differing brother, in the candid hope that, notwithstanding his different conclusions, he has been equally careful to ascertain the mind of Christ, and is equally satisfied of his own success.

This may seem a long digression. But our object is to ascertain the legitimate authority of a christian minister; and it seems, in order to that, necessary to determine what constitutes a man a legitimate minister. To a mind solicitous on this subject, both questions will require a reply; what authority has the Lord Jesus confided to his ministers? and has he confided that authority to me by constituting me one of his servants in the church? Now, while willing to exercise large charity to those of different judgments and practices, we respectfully but utterly deny the necessity of episcopal ordination,

as transmitting a supposed sole apostolic succession to the validity of a ministerial call and character. We have in the New Testament immediate fellowship with the apostles. We have there a knowledge, from their own pens, of their principles and practices. Our communion with them; our succession to them; our sanction by them, do not depend on a long, precarious transmission of a form; but rest on our obedience to instructions given to us immediately from themselves, by their own pens. And on this ground we are bold to believe that he is called by the Spirit of Christ to the office of a bishop, and is, in an orderly manner, inducted into it by the only competent human authority provided by the Saviour to act in the affair, who, with gracious, moral, and suitable intellectual qualifications, is animated with an ardent, irrepressible desire for the holy work; and is sanctioned by the solemn, cordial approval of other ministers, and by a christian people welcoming him to the oversight of them, to the exercise of the minister's work and office among them. And when such approval of ministers and people has been publicly expressed by solemn ordination services, the whole authority of a christian minister resides in that pastor; and he may perform with perfect validity all that Christ has appointed his ministers to perform. And where the substance of this is, not the less or more for slight variations of order, mode, or form of ecclesiastical procedure.

Nothing has perhaps been so enormously perverted and abused, as the authority of the christian ministry. The most preposterous prerogatives and tyranny have been founded on a basis they have so encumbered and concealed, that it must be with equal surprise and delight, when a discovery is at last made of the simple, benign, gentle rule, which has been swelled and distorted into a sway so absolute and grinding. Into such excesses have these abuses run, such mischiefs and miseries have they inflicted on mankind, as not unnaturally to excite prejudice and alarm at the bare mention of the authority of ministers of the gospel. For when the imagination realizes the decrees and anathemas of councils; the pomp, and power, and pride of prelates and popes; the cruel and execrable persecutions of inquisitors and men claiming to be christian and apostolic ministers; the claims of power to remit sin, to bind conscience, to interpret infallibly and authoritatively the word of God; the requiring of christian people absolute submission and unresisting obedience;—these things amaze and shock the mind. Yet have they been all done in the name of Christ, and by authority claimed as his ministers. The consciences and lives, the souls and bodies of men, have been reduced to a miserable slavery under ecclesiastical domination. All the terrors and miseries of superstition have been inflicted on men by an aspiring christian priesthood, till it has become the plain duty and interest of all men, as ever they value Divine truth and their own souls, as ever they regard their rights and liberties as men or Christians, to be jealous of the power claimed or exercised by the ministers of religion. And yet all this is but the wicked abuse, by men lusting for dominion, wealth, and pomp, of an institution in itself the most friendly to truth and happiness, of an authority

purely spiritual, confided to christian ministers for no purposes but to promote piety and virtue, happiness and salvation among mankind.

The first point of administrative authority, plainly and fully confided by the Lord Jesus to his ministers, respects the publication in all the world of his gospel. "All power," said he, "in heaven and earth is committed to me. Go ye therefore into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." The preaching, therefore, of Christ's gospel in all ages, in all lands, rests on no general considerations, however just and wise, of utility or necessity; nor primarily on our conviction of its supreme excellency, and of its value and importance to mankind, but on the command of Christ; and the right and authority of christian ministers and missionaries to proclaim every where their message has the same foundation. If a door of opportunity be set before a minister of Christ, to open his commission in an idolatrous kingdom, as China, for instance, where there is a false religion of great antiquity, and of great authority with the people, what reply could he give were he questioned as to his right and claim to interfere with the religious customs and opinions of the people, the traditions of their fathers, the instructions of their priests, and the institutions established and upheld by their government; but this, that he was sent and commissioned by Christ, the Saviour and Judge of men, the Lord of truth and conscience? Of this authority they would be ignorant, and at least, until better informed, would despise it; but it is really the authority on which his servants act, by which they are sustained, and to which the final appeal must be made. So in the stated ministry of the word, the minister preaches not merely under a mutual compact with his people to that effect, but under a commission from Christ. By him, he is invested with authority, as well as laid under duty, to preach the whole truth of his gospel, even every unwelcome, humbling, condemnatory doctrine. If he be asked by any unsubmissive spirit among his hearers, by what authority he presumes to reprove, rebuke, exhort, his answer is, Christ empowered me, as well as charged me to publish and enforce this truth. It is as responsible to him that I preach, and you hear. Equally so, if faithful men, in Christian lands, find the people scattered as having no shepherd, through the neglect, unfaithfulness, and erroneous doctrine of those, by whatever authority appointed, who claim to be their pastors; and go to them with a purer and more zealous ministry, when they are upbraided as unauthorized, and schismatics, and intruders, may make their appeal to authority and commission from Christ; and they and their opponents must equally abide the great decision of him, who will own and recompence his faithful servants, and condemn and punish idle shepherds. We must no more renounce than abuse this divine commission and authority for preaching the gospel. It has been vested in every true minister of Christ, from the beginning of his dispensation. If it be said, how are ministers to be sure they are really thus commissioned and authorized? or how are their hearers to know it of them? And who is to be judge in the case? The answer is, Christ is the judge, and has appointed a day in which

he will declare who have been the faithful shepherds of his flock, sent and empowered by him; and who have been but pretenders, wolves in sheep's clothing: a day in which he will equally determine among the hearers of his ministers, who have received with obedient mind his truth from the lips of his servants, and have therefore received him; and who have been despisers or neglecters of his truth, ordinances, and ministers, and therefore of himself. And in the mean time, it being publicly declared that the case is so; that the gospel is preached by Christ's divine authority, of which he, at his appointed day of judgment, will take account; all who preach, and all who hear, are equally bound to act as desiring to be found faithful, and therefore to know his word and will, as those who must give account. And this state of the case connects sacredness, vitality, power, with the whole ministration of gospel truth, and makes it adapted to promote that kingdom, which consists in a rule over consciences, and willing subjects. No further sanction is either possible or necessary to a gospel ministry. Any human force or terror, any worldly attractions or interests, can in no way promote the gospel, or aid the authority of its ministers. They come in Christ's name, preach his truth, and appeal to his judgment, both on their own and their hearers' account, and there leave their cause and labour. If it be asked, but should the congregation slight the pastor's faithful testimony, or hate and reject him for it; should a heathen people despise the missionary's authority and message, and expel him from their borders, is there no remedy? The case must stand over to the great audit. An apostle could but have shook the dust from his raiment, in solemn testimony of his fidelity and their guilt, and so appeal to the great decision. The gospel ministry, indeed, now pretends to no infallible declaration of truth, or authoritative interpretation of scripture; but makes its appeal to conscience and the divine word. The hearer is not bereft of his christian liberty, the minister usurps not lordship over reason and conscience. He is commissioned to preach what he deems pure, simple, gospel truth. Therein is the trial of his diligence and fidelity. The hearer listens to his testimony, as to that of one sent of Christ to preach his truth, yet liable to error. But there is the word of God, as the appeal of both. The minister requires assent and submission to his testimony, not merely because he is commissioned of Christ, but because what he advances is scriptural. The written word, not the preacher's commission, is the test of truth. And if a hearer withholds assent to the statements of a minister, because he deems them unscriptural, he offends not against the minister's commission and authority, as between preacher and hearer, but the case stands over for the decision of the Great Judge, to whose word now, and judgment hereafter, both equally appeal as the authority they venerate, and to which they are accountable. This derivation of his commission immediately from Christ, gives a faithful minister great courage and liberty in expounding the word of God. He stands under no compact with men, to withhold any part of divine truth. Its whole extent and variety is open to him. True, as churches are now constituted of Christians, who have separated themselves from other communities of the

faithful, and have united in fellowship upon their agreement in certain views of doctrine and discipline, they, as a matter of course, choose those to be their ministers who also agree with them therein. And from the beginning of the relationship, between pastor and people, obtain satisfaction that their ministers are, in their view, sound in the faith: a solemn duty of churches as conservators of the truth, and as studying their own edification and peace. An upright minister, therefore, will not attempt to controvert or conceal those truths among a people, by the profession of which he originally obtained their confidence, and his sacred office among them. But if, on subsequent investigation, he has found reason to change his views in respect to them, he will state the fact, and withdraw from a station for which he is no longer qualified. Within those limits, which are indeed no restraint to an honest mind, which really believes what is professed, the minister of Christ, as sent by him and accountable to him, is faithful to truth and to souls. With him awe towards Christ, is courage towards men. This conviction that every true gospel minister owes his commission, authority, and account to Christ, duly considered, would render ministers solemn and tender in assuming their office; courageous, faithful, zealous, in the discharge of it. It would make hearers of the gospel duly esteem the persons, office, and labours of their ministers. It would equally forbid ministers to assume and aspire in the church, for to remember their master's commission, and their own account to him, would make them truly humble; or the people to slight either the messenger, or the message of Christ. Both ministers and people would think men nothing, and Jesus all in all. While the gospel ministry, in this view of it, would appear an instrumentality of eminent efficacy to advance the kingdom of heaven, not merely by natural suitableness and adaptation, though that is great; but by divine authority and appointment; by Christ in the gospel ministry renewing, employing, sustaining it from age to age.

The second point of authority confided by Christ to his ministers, has respect to the administration of his instituted ordinances. Those whom he charged, and therefore authorized to teach all nations, he also in like terms instructed and empowered to baptize all who should receive their testimony. It has suited the views of carnal, aspiring, superstitious intruders into the gospel ministry, to attach exaggerated importance and efficacy to gospel ordinances, in order to exalt themselves into power, as holding the office by which they alone were entitled to administer these mysterious, awful rites; an artifice common to priestcraft in all ages and countries. Let it be once established in the minds of the people, that these rites are necessary and efficacious to salvation; and that by none but a priest could they be administered with validity and success; then the priests holding in their arbitrary power the souls and the hopes of the subdued and terrified people, can exact of them any terms, any submission. It is but to withhold or suspend the offices of religion, and the miserable devotees are brought trembling to the feet of their tyrants and oppressors. And in proportion as the sacraments are unduly magnified, or are perverted from their true character and

use, the tendency is to exalt the minister by the delusion of the flock. The very nature of the case, the apostolic practice from the beginning, and the necessity of solemn order in sacred services, unite to show that the ministers of religion should alone dispense its instituted offices. Not that this rule could, under no extreme circumstances of necessity, be dispensed with; but that it is the will of Christ, this should be the established order of his church. He who is duly received by a people as their minister, appears among them qualified and empowered to preside at their sacramental table, and to baptize their infant offspring. These services, so performed by him, have all the formal efficacy required in the case, and the measure of spiritual benefit received through them, as well as through the preaching of the word, depends upon the sovereign disposal of gracious influence by the Great Head of the Church, not irrespective of the faith, prayer, and spirituality both of the pastor who officiates, and of the persons who receive the signs and pledges of grace by his ministration. How important the due and regular attendance upon the gospel institutions of baptism, and the Eucharist, is, needs not now be declared. But so it is. Let these appointments be vitiated or neglected—let them be regarded and used with superstition, or forsaken as undeserving regard, or neglected from want of pious concern for gospel privileges and duties, and then true religion will be found in decay and feebleness. To explain them accurately to the people; to administer them with decent, devout solemnity and sacred unction; to gather the flock to them with awe and joy, is one of the great duties of a christian shepherd. He will, therefore, rejoice to feel himself possessed of a divine commission for the valid performance of them; and neither to exalt himself, nor to enslave the people; neither to magnify the services unduly, nor to engage for them an excessive and dangerous confidence from the people; but to fulfil the command of Christ, to maintain the order, the edification, the worship of his church, he will delight to feel he can administer the sacraments with a valid and sufficient authority. It will not move him that some of his brethren impeach his character and functions as a christian minister, and deny the validity of his ministrations of the sacraments, because he follows not them in every iota of ecclesiastical order. It is enough for him that his own heart and mind witness for his call to the ministry; that a christian people have hailed him as a pastor sent them in the providence and grace of Christ; and that the great Spirit has not left him without the crowning testimony of his power and grace on his humble labours. Then will he meekly hail the promised approving presence of Christ, while he breaks the bread and pours the wine, while he applies the washing of regeneration in token of the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

Again, christian ministers have authority to preside over the order, worship, and discipline of the churches. Theirs is an administrative authority for carrying into effect the whole will of Christ, in the gathering and governing his church. In such societies there must be a presiding and executive authority, and for that necessary provision is made by the Lord Jesus in the gospel ministry. It is to

be carefully noted on the one hand, that this is an executive power; it decrees nothing, makes no laws, but only carries into effect the decrees and laws of Christ: and on the other hand, it is not an authority which excludes the agency, or forces the submission of the people. They as well as their ministers have a duty to perform in preservation among them of worship, order, and discipline. It is their care to obtain ministers who will faithfully administer the laws of Christ's kingdom, and to co-operate with, and sustain their pastors, in that important duty. It is by their act and concurrence that worship is established, order maintained, and discipline enforced. Even in execution of Christ's law, the pastors cannot act, and enforce their determinations, against or without the consent of the church.

It is the church itself, the whole community that receives its members and excludes unworthy offenders. But in all that concerns order, worship, and discipline, it is the part of the ministers to lead, to preside, to originate, to execute. They are to take the oversight of the flock. They are to rule well. Had voluntary societies been formed and instructed to maintain assemblies for worship, and with sacred regard for character, to receive accessions to their numbers, and to exclude such as proved unworthy, common reason and the necessity of the case would soon have pointed out the necessity of appointing some to preside over, and to act in the name of the whole community. Christian ministers are placed by a divine appointment in that office and authority. What particular person shall be pastor of each separate church is left to the free choice of that people; but once chosen he is, by virtue of his office, their president, guide, counsellor, to conduct and execute all their spiritual affairs. But supposing the people, conscientiously, in any case, differing from their pastor's judgment, and therefore unable to comply with his proposal, has he any power to enforce his view and require their submission? No. It is for his consideration, whether, under the circumstances, conscience and prudence will dictate his retaining or resigning his office. But if he has plain scripture to warrant, yea to require what he proposes, as, for instance, the expulsion of a disgraceful member, and the people from corrupt views and evil passions refuse concurrence, his duty is plain; he cannot force them, but he must leave them. In a word, a christian pastor is the ruling president, and acting authority over a voluntary community of christian people. He is so by the very same appointment, by which they are a church, that of Jesus Christ. He who authorized and required them to unite in godly fellowship, in like manner appointed to perform among them the shepherd's office, those whom the Holy Ghost should make overseers of the flock. Both pastors and people are equally required to maintain the order, worship, and discipline he has appointed, but in different ways: the ministers as presiding, proposing, putting into execution; the people as complying, concurring, supporting.

Once more, christian ministers have authority to receive maintenance of the people. Christ hath ordained that they who preach the gospel, should live of the gospel. From Christ, then, ministers

have authority to receive; from Christ their people are under charge and duty to give, temporal supplies. This might be established on grounds of common equity, and as productive of most evident and important advantage. But it is observable that we are not left in the church of Christ to the dictates of reason and propriety, even in those cases where their voice would be most unambiguous and forcible, or in which, as respecting temporal and ordinary affairs, it would be most natural that there, if any where, we should be left to their direction. On the contrary, we have, even in these plain cases, express precept, even in these temporal arrangements we rest on divine authority, not on reason, however plain, nor on equity however strong. But where this sacred authority is provided, the interference of other power is of course excluded. By means of it the church is separated from the world to be governed by its own king, and by its own laws. The provision for the temporal support of christian ministers is already made. Christ has given charge to his people to provide for them. There is no room for the state to come in and interfere. A higher authority has already arranged the temporal as well as the spiritual affairs of a kingdom not of this world. Ministers of Christ want not to be armed with the power of the state for the levy of a compulsory tax for their benefit, by process of law, by distraint of goods, by imprisonment of person. They open the Bible, the statute-book of the church, and there is the law of Christ binding on conscience, "let him that is taught in the word, communicate to him that teacheth in all good things." There also is the sanction of the law, not consisting in temporal penalties inflicted by the secular power; but in retribution from Christ himself, the great lawgiver and judge, "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." And there also is the efficacy of the law secured by him who makes his people willing in the day of his power, by a rule over hearts which opens them, as Lydia's and the jailer's, to acts of kindness for the ministers of Christ as soon as they feel the power of his gospel. In a word, the ministers of the gospel are in the most immediate connexion with the Lord Jesus, and dependence on him. They are his servants; their authority is from him; their support he provides; to him they give account. Every thing connected with their office is sacred, because of his appointment and authority. Therefore, as far as prudence and disinterestedness will allow, they can plead with their people that Christ has by one and the same law, made it the duty of ministers to communicate to the people their spiritual things, and of the people to communicate to their ministers of their carnal things. And when Jesus gives his grace to make ministers faithful, and their people bountiful; when the ministers labour for their people's souls, not for their money, seeking not theirs but them; and yet the people, enjoying great spiritual benefit and happiness by their pastor's faithful services, in their joy and gratitude feel constrained to willing bounty; then there is no money better earned, more freely given, or more happily enjoyed. It is equally given and received according to the will of Christ.

In conclusion it may be observed, that the authority conferred by Christ on his ministers is sufficient and adapted for the purposes of their work and object. That object is to promote the piety, virtue, and salvation of men. That object is to administer the laws of a kingdom purely spiritual, in which force and coercion can have no place; in which all obedience to be acceptable must be willing; the obedience of the mind, the heart, the conscience. Those ministers who have found or thought their authority insufficient, have had other purposes than these to accomplish; the aggrandizement of their order, or some secular system of policy. As soon as the church is mingled with the world, and united with the state, other powers are indeed required by its ministers, and are obtained, not from Christ or the New Testament, but from the state, from human authority. But while christian churches continue separated from the world to promote the kingdom of heaven, and the salvation of men, so long it is enough that their ministers have power to preach the word, and to administer the ordinances of Christ, to preside over the discipline and worship of the faithful, and to receive for their support the voluntary offerings of those to whose spiritual welfare they minister. If we were to judge from the writings of the advocates of hierarchies and state religions, the greatest danger to be apprehended in the church is defect of power on the part of its ministers; and insubordination, incomplete subjection on the part of the people. Whereas, when we open the New Testament, and hear the discourses, bearing on this subject, of Christ and his apostles, the entire representation is reversed. There, though exhortations to obedience addressed to the people, are not wanting, yet as to dangers to be guarded against, the most frequent and emphatic warnings have respect to assumptions of power and dominion by the ministers of the word, and they are charged in a way significant enough of the tendencies foreseen and guarded against, "not to be lords over God's heritage;" "not to be called Rabbi; not to resemble those who among the nations are called benefactors, because they exercise lordship over them; but that in this unearthly dispensation the least, the humblest, the most willing to serve, shall be accounted greatest. While, if there be a fact placed beyond dispute or doubt by the recorded experience of all nations and ages, it is, that of all forms of power that can be trusted to human hands, no one so surely tends to abuse and excess as authority spiritual or ecclesiastical. Its possessors are so prone to feel exalted by it; they find so ready a course to its augmentation in the superstition of mankind; they perceive it to be so effectual an instrument of their own wealth and greatness, that there is no safety for the interests of religion, the liberty of the people, and the purity of the ministry, but in strictly confining to its proper objects and proper limits, the power confided to his servants by the Great Master, Jesus Christ.

It is next observable, that the powers of the christian ministry can effect their proper purpose only through the blessing and influence of him from whom they are derived. In whatever instance or mode human force comes in to sustain them, it in fact defeats their proper

end of guiding and ruling for their own benefit, and their Master's honour, willing servants. If a minister obtains his appointment, exacts his dues, performs his duties, enforces his censures by power of law and secular penalty, all this may administer effectually the affairs of a worldly establishment, but has not the least tendency to promote spiritual communion and obedience to Christ, but the exact contrary. When a minister appears among his people resting all his claims on a divine appointment, armed with no human power or terror, he may seem feeble, helpless, and exposed. In reality he is depending on the unseen power of the Great Lord of the Church to give effect to the word he preaches; sweetness and grace with the ordinances he administers; acquiescence and submission to the discipline he maintains; willingness to contribute the support he needs. Grace from Christ, working on the consciences and affections of men, is his whole dependence. Apart from this his authority has no basis, his labour no success. If he depend not on this, he has nothing to rest upon, as for this there can be no substitute: but where this is vouchsafed, his weapons, which are not carnal, become mighty through God.

Lastly: it is strikingly observable how the constitution and arrangements of the christian church, the authority of ministers, and the duty of the people, are all adapted to exercise and promote the best graces and virtues of true piety. All these regulations, indeed, presuppose godliness in those who are to submit to them, or administer them. They are intended not for the lawless and disobedient, but for the government of willing, affectionate subjects. They cannot be sustained but by humility, forbearance, self-denial, peacefulness on the part both of ministers and people. The proud, the ambitious, the covetous will find nothing attractive in the ministry of the gospel, as instituted by Christ. If they usurp the office, it must be for the sake of the abuse of which it is susceptible. In itself it is intended not to gratify such passions as theirs, but to exercise self-denial, faith, and laborious zeal. And a church formed of such characters, and governed on those principles that the gospel requires, will be equally unattractive to the worldly and carnal mind. It is the beloved asylum and resort of the devout, the gracious, the heavenly-minded. To them its laws are welcome, its discipline liberty, its associations delightful. As these graces and virtues abound among ministers and people, the laws of Christ have their full authority, and their adaptation for holy, spiritual purposes is felt and seen. "My kingdom is not of this world," is a declaration which, rightly understood, explains and vindicates the appointment of a ministry, "not according to the law of a carnal commandment, but according to the power of an endless life."

FRIEND WHEELER'S RELIGIOUS VISIT TO SOME OF THE ISLANDS OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN.

THE ministers of the Society of Friends are allowed, by its regulations, to make religious visits throughout the United Kingdoms, and also to foreign parts.

When any of their preachers feel "a concern" to undertake a missionary tour in distant countries, they are required to communicate their wishes to the Quarterly Meeting to which they belong, and to "lay their concern before the meeting of ministers and elders in London also."

While it is a principle with the Friends that no minister ought to be paid for his religious labours, yet if the appropriate meetings respectively encourage "a speaking friend" to travel, they will defray the expenses of the outfit, voyage, &c. from a fund for miscellaneous purposes, called their "national stock."

Amongst the ministers of the society is a gentleman named Daniel Wheeler. He was brought up, we understand, to the sea service, but becoming "a convinced friend," he settled in the neighbourhood of Sheffield, and gave himself to agricultural pursuits. The Emperor Alexander wishing to have some experiments made upon the bogs in the neighbourhood of St. Petersburg, on the recommendation of Mr. Wm. Allen, employed Friend Wheeler, who settled on a farm at Shoosharry, near that capital, where he continued to reside until he left his family for a season, under the circumstances we are about to explain.

"Having, for a considerable time past, felt his mind strongly attracted in the love of the gospel towards the inhabitants of the islands in the Pacific Ocean," Friend Wheeler believed, about four years ago, "that the time had arrived that he must surrender himself to the service," and therefore "spread his concern before Balby monthly meeting in Yorkshire, of which he is a member, the quarterly meeting of York, and the morning meeting of ministers and elders in London."

"Much unity and sympathy were felt and expressed with their dear friend" in all these meetings, which was practically displayed by the generous efforts of those who united to purchase the "Henry Freeling," lately a post-office packet, of 101 tons, and to equip it for the lengthened voyage. Friend Wheeler's son Charles, "believing it his duty to offer himself as a companion to his father," was, after due deliberation, accepted by the committee in that capacity.

The necessary arrangements having been completed, they sailed from the river Thames on the 13th day of the 11th month (November), 1833, but were detained in the Channel by a succession of contrary winds and boisterous weather for nearly four months, so that they were not clear of the Needle Rocks, and fairly out at sea until the 15th of the 3d month (March), 1834. The first fruits of this perilous enterprize are now before us in the form of two octavo pamphlets, of more than 100 pages, which have been printed for the

use of the society, and entitled "*Extracts from the Letters and Journals of Daniel Wheeler, now engaged in a religious visit to some of the Islands of the Pacific Ocean,*" &c. This novel enterprise having been referred to in the last Report of the London Missionary Society, and considerable interest having been excited by it amongst the friends of that institution, we have felt it right, as the pamphlets are not on sale, to present our readers with a series of quotations, which appear most likely to inform and gratify them on this subject.

We have not room for the details of their long and very dangerous passage, during which their principles as Friends, and their faith as Christians, were often brought to a severe test, but we make the following extracts from the Journal, as they illustrate the spirit in which they met the threatened hostility of a piratical vessel, and the readiness with which they acknowledged the hand of God in their remarkable deliverance from the violence of the storm.

"5th mo. 10th. This afternoon, at sunset, a brig was seen upon our lee quarter, steering the same course as ourselves, perhaps three or four miles distant from us; she was soon covered up by the night, and no more thought of. Being upon the deck, (an usual practice with me the fore part of the night,) between 9 and 10 o'clock, the carpenter suddenly exclaimed, 'Why, here's this brig!' Upon looking, I saw the vessel at a considerable distance from us, but soon perceived by the stars that she was approaching with uncommon rapidity in a most suspicious direction, as if intending to cross our fore-foot, and cut us off. We watched her very narrowly, expecting every minute she would open a fire upon us. She continued to haul directly across our head at a very short distance from us, but we steadily kept our course, without the slightest variation, or manifesting any symptoms of hurry or fear, or noticing her in any way. I felt our situation to be at the moment very critical, knowing that these latitudes, and particularly this neighbourhood, are exceedingly infested with piratical vessels, which find shelter in the Brazilian harbours as traders, where they fit out occasionally for Africa with merchandize, and return with whole cargoes of oppressed Africans for sale, landing them on private parts of the Brazil coast; at other times they act as pirates, when it suits their convenience, or are in want of stores. This was indeed a trial of faith of no common kind; but my mind was stayed upon the Lord, feeling a good degree of resignation to His Holy Will, whatever might be permitted to befall us. After watching the vessel with anxiety for some time, she passed away, without making the least apparent stop. On considering the matter, we concluded that when she saw us at sunset, we were taken for a Dutch galiot, that might fall an easy prey to her; but when she came to us in the dark, near enough to examine with telescopes the real shape of our vessel, we were found of such a suspicious build of a non-descript kind, not seen before in these seas, as might lead to the supposition that we were intended as a decoy, and though very tame-looking without, yet perhaps fiery hot within, if meddled with. From the position she took, there is no doubt she expected to throw us into confusion by firing into us, and then in the midst of it to have boarded us on the weather side. There was not the least glimmer of light to be seen on board of her, whilst the 'Henry Freeling' was well lighted up in both cabins and the binnacle, and the reflection from our sky-lights was well calculated to puzzle and intimidate her crew, as this circumstance would be sufficient at once to show that we were not a common merchant vessel. The captain, cook, steward, Charles and myself were all additional persons upon the deck besides the regular watch, which would give an idea of strength to them, unusual in so small a vessel as the 'Henry Freeling.' Every thing was conducted with great quietness, not the least hint given to any one on board to prepare for an attack: the watch below was not even informed of what seemed to

await us upon the deck. The Lord only was our deliverer, for she was restrained from laying a hand upon our little bark; and to Him alone our preservation is with gratitude and thankfulness ascribed. The crews of these pirates consist in general of desperadoes of all nations, who frequently commit the most dreadful atrocities on board the ships they seize upon, in putting to death all those who oppose their boarding them; they are mostly crowded with men amply sufficient in number to take and destroy some of our large armed traders. This vessel was doubtless a selected one for the work; we thought she actually sailed twice as fast as the 'Henry Freeling,' which is far from being a slow vessel. We saw no more of her, but after midnight I partook of some refreshing sleep."

"6th mo. 22d. 'Lying to' as yesterday, the storm still raging with unabated violence, squalls, heavy rain and lightning through the night. The sea having risen to a fearful height, has frequently inundated the deck of the vessel, and from the continual working of her whole frame, our bed places have been unfit to sleep in, the water having found its way through numerous chinks. This morning early a heavy sea broke into us, bringing a larger quantity of water upon the deck than at any time before. To myself a very remarkable and striking event took place this morning. Shortly after the vessel had shipped a heavy body of water, I went up the hatchway to look round for a short interval; at that moment the sea was running in mountainous succession, and I observed that some of the loftiest of the waves were very nearly prevailing against our little vessel; it seemed as if she could not much longer escape being overwhelmed by them altogether. I made no remark to any one, but soon after we tried to get some breakfast; whilst so occupied, one of the men called down to inform us that there was a sight worth looking at on deck, it was a large collection of a small species of the whale, close by the ship; I thought I should like to see them; there were perhaps more than two hundred of these animals close to us, about twelve feet long each. When I went upon deck after breakfast they were still close to our bows, and the man at the helm said, that they served as a breakwater for us: their being so was afterwards mentioned by some other person. At last my eyes were open to discover the protection they were affording our little struggling vessel; they occupied a considerable portion of the surface of the sea, in the exact direction between the vessel and the wind and waves, reaching so near to us that some of them might have been struck with a harpoon; they remained constantly swimming in gentle and steady order, as if to maintain the position of a regular phalanx, and I suggested that nothing should be done to frighten them away. It was openly remarked by some, that not one sea had broken on board us whilst they occupied their useful post, and when they at last retired, it was perceived that the waves did not rage with the same violence as before they came to our relief. I give this wonderful circumstance just as it occurred, and if any should be disposed to view it as a thing of chance, I do not, for I believe it to be one of the great and marvellous works of the Lord God Almighty. These friends in need, and friends indeed, filled up a sufficiently wide space upon two of the large swells of the ocean as completely to obstruct the approach of each succeeding wave opposed to the vessel, so that if the third wave from us was coming in lofty foam towards us, by the time it had rolled over and become the second wave, its foaming threatening aspect was destroyed entirely, reaching us at last in the form of a dead and harmless swell. They are a very oily fish, and seldom larger than to yield about two barrels of oil; they are commonly called Black Fish."

After a most harassing voyage of thirteen months, in the course of which the "Henry Freeling" visited Rio de Janeiro, Hobart Town, Van Dieman's Land, and Port Jackson, New South Wales, the mountains of the long looked-for Tahiti were discovered through the gloom that overhung the deep, and at noon on the 30th of April, 1834, they passed in safety through Matiava bay.

"A canoe with four of the natives came off to us, bringing oranges, guavas, and other kinds of fruit, which we purchased, after much bargaining, for a hank of thread, and three small needles to each individual, although the price they first asked was a dollar for each basket; there were five baskets of fruit, perhaps the greater part of a cwt. and the baskets included in the purchase. We were all pleased with the openness and simplicity of these people. At 2 P. M. we took Jemmy the pilot on board, and immediately entered the channel within the reefs, but after getting through the most dangerous part, it fell calm, which obliged us to drop an anchor for the night directly opposite the house of George Bignal, so close to the shore that a mooring hawser was made fast to one of his cocoa-nut trees. By this time our deck was covered with the natives. Just as we were ready to go on shore to take tea at George Bignal's, (to whom, as deputy consul, the mail brought from New South Wales had been delivered,) the young king, (or perhaps it is more correct to say, the husband of the queen,) came on board, with his younger brother and uncle, and several others; they behaved with great openness and cheerfulness, and seemed highly pleased to see us. Our captain was personally known to them already. They soon looked round the vessel apparently delighted, left us a basket of oranges, and said they would come again to-morrow. To my great rejoicing, the pilot soon after coming on board, informed us (officially) of the disuse of ardent spirits altogether, by saying, 'Rum is no good here.' The total abolition of spirituous liquors has been so strongly enforced, that they have taken them out of private houses, without exception, and thrown them away; and the natives have carried it to the length of smelling the breath of people to ascertain whether it had been used, and, if found to be the case, a severe fine was imposed; so that a person well known to lead a thoroughly sober life was not allowed to have such a thing in his possession, and liable at any time to undergo a search."

The following account of Friend Wheeler's first ministerial interview with the missionaries and converted natives will be read with interest.

"Having understood that on the present occasion, the principal chiefs from all parts of the island would be there, (at Papawa) and a large muster of the inhabitants residing in this district, it occurred to my mind that it would be a favourable medium, through which my arrival might be publicly announced to all the distant districts, if at a suitable time my certificates should be read. On mentioning this to George Pritchard, and showing him the translation so kindly made before I left London, by William Ellis, he at once saw the propriety, but said, it would be necessary to consult Henry Nott, the senior missionary resident at Papawa, G. P. himself being a junior; this was a matter of course, and had I been aware of the distinction, I should myself have proposed it. From the wind having sprang up a fresh breeze against us, we were rather late in reaching our destination, and Henry Nott had taken his seat in the meeting before we got to it. We followed G. Pritchard through a large number of people that were already assembled, until we got up to H. Nott, who, on being consulted, immediately consented that it should be done, when their service was over. We then took our seats, having kept on our hats until that moment; but the heat of the climate renders it too oppressive to keep them on for any great length of time. We heard of no remark however having been made on this head, whatever might have been thought. They commenced by G. Pritchard giving out a hymn, then part of the Epistle to the Ephesians was read, after which G. P. kneeled down and prayed; another hymn was then sung, after this Charles Wilson preached a long sermon from a text out of the same epistle; when this was finished another hymn was given out, at his request, and he afterwards finished with prayer. Some business then came on relating to the affairs of the Missionary Society, when the island queen took her seat as its president. We merely sat as silent spectators through the whole of this, which from beginning to end, was conducted in the Tahitian language. As only G. Pritchard sat

between myself and the queen, I observed that she was employed in reading my certificates, which had been previously laid upon the table. The whole of my certificates were then audibly read in the Tahitian language, by G. Pritchard, who took great pains to give ample explanation whenever needful. The marked attention and solidity of countenance manifested by the wondering Tahitians, was both striking and comforting; and the solemnity which spread over this large assembly, had previously covered my mind as with a mantle, contriting my spirit under a sense, that the great Master himself was there. After the reading of the certificates was gone through, profound silence reigned. I asked if I might say a few words, which was at once permitted, and George Pritchard agreed to interpret between me and the people. I requested him just to repeat what I said, and I have reason to believe this was faithfully done; and was, to the best of my recollection after this manner. 'I have no wish to trespass upon the time of this meeting. I was desirous that these documents or certificates might be read, which would account for a stranger being present, and inform them that I came not there in my own will, but in the will of my Lord and Master, whose I am, and whom I desire to serve to my latest breath; and I would also let them know that I came with the full unity, and consent of that branch of the christian church in England, of which I am a member. And now grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, be multiplied upon all the inhabitants of this land; and may the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, keeps our hearts and minds, &c. &c.'

"After I sat down, a solemn silence again prevailed, until one of the natives, a supreme judge, broke it by addressing me by name, which he had caught from the certificates, and then declared on behalf of himself and the islanders, that the manner of my coming among them was very satisfactory, because what had been read and said, was in accordance with the gospel, which they had been taught and were acquainted with. He also, at considerable length, touched upon the great distance I had come over the deep waters to see them, and to do them good, that, in return, their hearts and arms, and habitations, in effect, were open to receive me; duly appreciating the purity and disinterestedness of the motive that had induced the step; having no trade, nor other object in view. He hoped I should visit all their schools, and stroke the heads of the children; that he should now deliver them all to my hands. I told G. Pritchard to say that the dear children would always have a strong hold, and a strong claim upon my heart. Much more transpired that was truly consoling and comforting: and the missionaries who spoke on the occasion, I truly believe, most fully and cordially co-operated in endeavouring to explain my views to the people, in terms of strong approbation.

"Although the above may not be exactly verbatim, it is the substance of what passed. When it was all over, Henry Nott kneeled down and concluded the meeting with prayer in the Tahitian. The natives then generally rose from their seats, and began to flock around us, and to shake hands with Charles and myself in a very hearty manner, and without regard to order, age, or sex, from the humble peasant to the bronze coloured queen, her two aunts, and the numerous chiefs, who, I think, are the stoutest, most giant like men I ever saw assembled together. About 800 persons were collected at this meeting; but the house was so extensive, that it seemed impossible to make any accurate estimate; for my own part, I should have supposed the number not less than a thousand. The judge before spoken of, in one of his speeches, (for he spoke three times,) hinted, that they perceived I was not exactly of the same description of Christians that had hitherto come amongst them, or I belonged to a different body."

It is probably known to most of our readers, that a French missionary ship, with a company of Romish priests, was dispatched by Charles the Tenth, to visit the Islands of the Pacific.

The subjoined passages will illustrate the policy both of our missionaries and their interesting converts towards the emissaries of Rome, who must be, indeed, blind with bigotry, or infatuated by envy, to attempt the conversion of a people already subjugated to the laws of Christ, while in various parts of the world so many nations of uncivilized idolaters, in all the degradation of their savage nature, are still entirely destitute of religious instruction.

"Yesterday morning, a native of Dundalk, in Ireland, by name Murphy, lately arrived in the 'Peruvian,' from Valparaiso, came on board. He stated, that his coming here is solely for the purpose of procuring a passage to the Sandwich islands, but that he is not suffered to remain here, for want of proper credentials, which are required of such as come to reside on shore. It is one of those cases in which I could not render any assistance, there being a decided law in this country that prevents strangers, under such circumstances, from coming amongst the people, and which applies to all foreigners. At the same time, it is pretty evident, that a fear of his introducing the Roman Catholic religion greatly operates against him; for which, it is probable, there may be some ground. Murphy acknowledges to have been six years at a college in Ireland, training for a priest; but that he never was ordained. He is now come from the Gambier islands, where, he says, there are six French Roman Catholic priests, and one English; but whatever may be the real cause of his coming here, his present situation renders him an object of pity, which we cannot relieve."

"10th. This morning received information that a public meeting of the principal chiefs and people of the island was about to take place, to consider the case of the supposed Roman Catholic. Although I had not been invited to a missionary conference which had taken place on this subject, yet I felt my way more than usually opened to attend the council of the Tahitians, then about to meet. Accordingly myself and Charles hastened to the shore, and landed opposite the building where the people were assembling.

"The queen, with her mother and attendants, were seated, or squatted upon the floor, surrounded by the chiefs of seven districts. The sister of the principal chief or King of Rorotonga, was one of the party. The business commenced with the examination of the Irish Roman Catholic; the place was now crowded with people, but the examination proceeded very slowly and unsatisfactorily; which I could not help perceiving, was entirely for want of an able interpreter, who thoroughly understood the English language as well as the Tahitian. The people were restless and unsettled from this circumstance, the most part, not seeming to know for what they had come together. None of the missionaries appeared willing (from sufficient reasons) to have any hand in the business; and seeing the real cause of the dilemma they had got into was still undiscovered, it seemed best for me to step forward, at a suitable moment, and state plainly to the heads of the meeting that it was impossible for the business to proceed satisfactorily without a competent interpreter was appointed; and turning to Captain Henry, who stood near me, requested him to inform the chiefs what I had said. This being done, the council agreed that Captain Henry should be chosen; and he having consented, things began to move more readily forward, until the Catholic made some assertions highly injurious to the missionary cause, and offensive to the queen and all her chiefs, who felt very indignant on the occasion; and which I knew to be incorrect. There did not seem any other part for me to act, however unpleasant, but publicly to contradict what he had said, and to declare that some of the language he had used had never been expressed by the person he was charging with having done it. This for a time caused considerable altercation; but having three witnesses on my side, this difficulty was soon got over, and order again restored. The examination continued, until the Catholic, unable to prove the statements he had made on first coming to Tahiti, and finding himself foiled on every side,

made a hasty retreat, to all appearance not a little offended. One of the chiefs then expatiated on the case, and stated to the assembly as follows :—‘ This man (meaning the Catholic) held out that he should not come to this meeting ; and it is seen that he did come to the meeting. He declared that he had a letter sealed with King William’s seal, (of England) and he had no such thing. That he had a letter from the British Ambassador at Paris, and he had no such thing : and now, by his running away, he has shown himself to be a deceiver.’ Then turning the attention of the assembly to my Charles and myself, he said, ‘ On their coming amongst us, we had no occasion to ask for letters ; they gave them themselves into our hands. It is known to every chief in the island there was no trouble with them, because they are not deceivers.’ He then finished his speech, by proposing that such a man should never be allowed to come amongst them. After this the queen’s speech was delivered by a clear-headed middle-aged chief, which concluded with a call upon all her faithful subjects to unite in never permitting this man, (the Catholic,) or any other of the same profession, to come to disturb the peace and tranquillity of Tahiti.”

(To be continued.)

DR. HENDERSON ON ROMANS VII. 14—25.

(To the Editor.)

MY DEAR SIR,—Permit me, through the medium of your pages, to set myself right with the readers of Mr. Beverley’s book recently published, respecting my views of the experience described by the apostle, Rom. vii. 14—25.* In acknowledging a copy of Professor Stuart’s Commentary on the Romans, which was kindly presented to me by the author, I certainly did communicate to him my opinion on more than one portion of the work. The reception given to my animadversions on what I considered to be untenable in his exposition of that part of chap. v., which treats of original sin, I have never learned. Nor was I aware, till Mr. Beverley’s letters were put into my hands, that any public use had been made of my privately expressed approval of his statements on the subject of which the apostle treats in the other passage referred to above. Had I anticipated any such publicity, I should undoubtedly have gone more

* The passages to which Dr. Henderson refers are in Mr. Beverley’s eleventh Letter “On the present State of the Visible Church of Christ,” &c. p. 76.

“If Germany has not yet exerted her dangerous influence over the minds of those who are educating for the ministry, is there no ground to fear that Professor Stuart’s† subtle commentaries have opened the way for a further advance towards Pelagian views, and that a writer who has been introduced amongst us, on high authority, as a sound teacher of the faith, has gained many converts, in this country, to opinions which in his own are already strongly contested?”

† The following passage appears in the third edition of Professor Stuart’s Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans.

“Another friend (having first mentioned Dr. Pye Smith), well known in this country, and also very dear to me, the Rev. Dr. Henderson, of Highbury College, in the precincts of London, who has also written a short prefatory commendation of the English edition of my Commentary, in a letter to me, dated June 24, 1833, has expressed his views in regard of my exegesis, of the passages in question in the following manner: ‘Your view of the 7th chapter meets with my approbation. I deem it most important. The other view seems greatly calculated to keep up and foster a low state of Christianity.’”—p. 619.

thoroughly into the question. I am free to confess, I had occasionally entertained doubts whether what has commonly been called the calvinistic view of it were correct; and these doubts were not only confirmed, but temporarily exchanged, for a contrary belief, by what appeared to be a forcible presentation of the argument founded on the close connexion between the conclusion of the seventh and the commencement of the eighth chapter. It did seem to me, that a direct antithesis had been made out between the states of personal experience which these passages describe. Under the influence of this persuasion I wrote to Professor Stuart. This happened about four years ago. Since that time I have had opportunities of re-examining the whole subject; and it is not a little remarkable, that only a fortnight before Mr. Beverley's book appeared, I happened to preach from the 24th and 25th verses, which I treated as exclusively descriptive of the experience of true believers, and that not merely at the commencement of their christian course, but onward till they reach its termination.

I will not, Mr. Editor, trespass on your patience, or that of your readers, by furnishing anything in the shape of an outline of my discourse; but I beg to be indulged while I briefly state the grounds on which I adhere to the exegesis of Augustine—an exegesis which was approved by the reformers, and has been defended by our best evangelical commentators in modern times.

1. The apostle employs the personal pronouns *I, my, and me* nearly *forty* times within the compass of twelve verses, without giving the least intimation of a transition from the subject of which he had been treating, which is undoubtedly his own experience. He even employs the emphatic compound *αὐτὸς ἐγὼ, I MYSELF*, ver. 25, to remove all dubiety.

2. While in the fifth and sixth verses he employs the first person plural, because he is depicting the experience of the Jewish Christians, who, like himself, had been set free by means of the gospel, he proceeds from the seventh to the thirteenth verse, to describe the operation of the law upon himself individually, or his own personal feelings in reference to it, when he was in an unconverted state. This he does by changing the first person plural to the first person singular; but still employing the past tense of the verbs to indicate a former condition. On reaching the fourteenth verse, however, though he retains the first person singular, he converts the *past* tense into the *present*, obviously with a view to mark his experience *subsequent* to the period of his conversion, and at the time he wrote.

3. The ardour of feeling which the apostle throws into the whole of his description evinces, that his own experience is the subject of discourse. He writes like one, who was painfully conscious of the conflict on which he expatiates, and not like one who merely describes the experience of another.

4. Several terms occur in the passage, which do not admit of an appropriate or unexceptionable application, to any but regenerate persons, such as—"the inward man," "the law of the mind," "delighting in the law of God," "not allowing that which is evil," "serving the law of God with the mind," and "thanking God" for

deliverance through the Lord Jesus Christ. Whereas, the terms and modes of expression which have been thought to militate against a state of grace are all easily reconcilable with it on the admitted ground of indwelling sin. What the apostle states is, that such sin, to the extent of its operation, went to produce all the opposition to the gracious principles of the new creation, which he so pathetically portrays; that, viewed in himself, apart from the counteracting influence of these principles, he had nothing but wretchedness in prospect; that no hope of deliverance could be obtained from any source but that which the gospel supplies; but that, supplied from this source, he fixedly and devotedly served the divine law, though the principle of carnality which still existed within him prevented him from rendering complete obedience to it, and exerted itself to the utmost to effect the commission of sin, ver. 25.

5. The connexion between the seventh and eighth chapters is not so close, as, in my opinion, to warrant the conclusion which Professor Stuart and others have endeavoured to establish. The inference (*ἀπα νῦν*) which the apostle draws, ch. viii. 1, is not from the statement he had just made respecting the internal conflict, but from what he had established in the preceding part of the epistle relative to the justification obtained by believers from the condemnatory sentence of the law, and the sanctification of which they were equally the subjects in consequence of the grace of the gospel.

6. What ought to settle the point, beyond all dispute, is the employment of the identical terms (in part) by the same apostle in his epistle to the Galatians (ch. v. 17,) where, it is obvious, the experience of the regenerate is the subject of discourse. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so THAT YE CANNOT DO THE THINGS THAT YE WOULD. (Comp. Rom. vii. 18, 19.) It is surprising that a passage so perfectly parallel should not have occurred to Professor Stuart, either when composing his Commentary, or his more elaborate *Excursus*, though, in the former, he adduces what have usually been quoted as parallels, from Xenophon, Euripides, Epictetus, Seneca, and others.

I conclude these remarks by observing, that there is nothing whatever in the Augustinian construction of the passage, which gives the least encouragement to licentiousness. Many an Antinomian has doubtless hugged it to his bosom, as a passport to heaven, notwithstanding the deep-stained characters of rebellion by which he has been marked; but he has only wrested it, as he has done the other scriptures, to his own destruction. Its tendencies upon the mind of a renewed sinner are diametrically the reverse. While he perceives in himself the exact counterpart of the picture, he is filled with abhorrence of the indwelling evil, and humbles himself before God on account of it; and gratefully exercising confidence in the mediation of his Saviour for continued rescue, he joyfully anticipates the state, where sin is known no more.

I remain, my dear Sir, yours ever truly,

E. HENDERSON.

December 8, 1836.

THE LAND OF HILLS.

"But the land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys."

Deut. xi. 11.

THE features of external nature have been arranged by the hand of the Creator, with wise and gracious reference to the happiness of man; to give him pleasure in the act of contemplation, as well as to contribute to his convenience. Its surface, agreeably diversified with hill and vale, and stream and plain, ministers to the sensorial gratification of its occupiers, and expands around them in every clime, an array of beauty and of grandeur, sometimes apart from each other, but often blended in wild yet tasteful and imposing combinations. Wherever the traveller penetrates he finds the configuration of our globe so arranged in ever-varying outline, as to spread before him an inviting picture of natural scenery and phenomena, which captivates, or soothes, or elevates, or excites the mind, and furnishes such pleasurable emotions as dull uniformity would not have yielded. Especially do those elevations which mark the face of the earth, whether rising to the stately proportion of mountains, or forming only the rounded, green-clad hill, give interest, grace, or sublimity to the landscape, and provide a thousand objects of endlessly variegated outline, to engage the painter's pencil and the poet's song.

But the mountains have been "brought forth" for other purposes, than to give imposing effect and picturesque beauty, to the scenery of the earth. Occupying a portion of its surface, nearly equal to that which the sandy desert claims, they stand associated with political and other results of the highest importance to mankind. Where the ocean does not extend its waters to divide the families, kindreds, and tongues of the human race, the granite snow-crowned rampart is frequently the line of demarcation; nations have thus been wisely kept apart from each other by natural boundaries; for the difficulties connected with aggressive wars between communities thus separated, have contributed to promote peace, and maintain independence. Mountains also give of the clouds of heaven to the thirsty earth, attracting them to their summits charged with all the fatness of the skies; the "high hills are a refuge for the wild goats and the rocks for the conies;" and in the dens and caves which perforate their declivities, liberty and religion have found a secure asylum, when struggling with grasping ambition and persecuting power. These are the "chief things of the ancient mountains, the precious things of the lasting hills;" they proclaim the majesty of Him who weigheth them "in scales" and "in a balance;" and thus with "fire and hail, snow and vapour, fruitful trees and all cedars," the "mountains and all hills," silently show forth His praise.

Palestine is rich in all those elements which constitute the grand and beautiful in the landscape; it was the mountain and the mountain-torrent—the valley broad and undulating, and the jagged and gloomy ravine—the open plain clad with the luxuriant herbage common to an eastern clime; and the discoveries of modern travel

bear testimony to the fidelity of the ancient description of it—"a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths, that spring out of the vallies and hills."

The mountainous districts of this once-favoured country, are principally composed of secondary limestone, intermingled with trap rocks. The country between Joppa and Jerusalem is compact limestone; the hill, on the lower slopes of which Nazareth is situated, is of a gray-coloured compact limestone; the field of blood mentioned by Matthew is of friable limestone; David's cave appears also to be situated in limestone; the Mount of Olives is of limestone in part granular; the same conchiferous strata occur in the valley of Jehoshaphat; the rocks around the pool of Siloa are of limestone; on Mount Zion they are of a conchoidal, grayish, siliceous limestone; Mount Lebanon appears principally composed of limestone; Mount Carmel has large balls of quartz contained in the limestone; all the rocks, in short, in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem are of compact limestone, in which also the numerous tombs around it are hewn. Mount Tabor, Bethel, and Capernaum seem also to be calcareous.*

It was the desire of Moses to be permitted to see the mountains of the Land of Promise, a desire natural in a lowlander, only accustomed to behold the flat sandy districts around the Nile: hence he prayed, "Let me go over, and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain and Lebanon." Though not allowed to do this, he appears to have obtained accurate information respecting them. He speaks of their abundant produce, "honey" being extracted from "the rock and oil from the flinty rock;" and of their mineral riches "whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass" (copper). The former statement was not a mere poetical fiction, for owing to the skill and perseverance of the Jewish agriculturists, the slopes and declivities of the mountains, up to their very summits, were brought under cultivation, and were crowned with aromatic flowers and olive trees, which yielded honey to the industrious bee, and oil to the laborious husbandman. We are also assured, that there were mines in Palestine and Mount Libanus, though they were never regularly worked by the Jews, owing to the scanty demand made for their products by a pastoral people, and the plentiful supply that might at any time be obtained from the neighbouring markets of Tyre. The ancient Jews, unlike their modern representatives, seem to have inherited a dislike to trade and commerce, to which indeed the Mosaic law gave no encouragement. Though seated on the shores of the Mediterranean, a situation favourable for extended commercial operations, and having the example of the enterprising Phenicians before them, they regarded such pursuits with aversion, and devoted themselves to agriculture, the products of which were intimately blended with their religious festivals. The character of the people differed in this respect from that of the orientals, who have generally been addicted to traffic, and breathed the spirit of the Greeks, who, in their best and purest

* Silliman's American Journal, June, 1835.

age, seem to have considered commerce incompatible with that magnanimity and personal independence in which they gloried.

From the mountainous character of Palestine, the descriptions given of it in scripture have frequently been impugned by modern infidelity: statements of its natural sterility and barrenness having been advanced in opposition to the historians of holy writ, who represent it as at one period abundantly productive and fertile. When Lot separated from Abraham, we are told that he "beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where—as the garden of the Lord, as the land of Egypt."* Isaac, when blessing Jacob, declared that God should give him "of the dew of heaven and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine."† The spies whom Moses despatched to see whether "the land be good or bad, fat or lean, whether there be wood therein or not," returned saying, "we came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey, and this is the fruit of it—they brought the pomegranates and the figs."‡ The appellation is of frequent occurrence with reference to Canaan, a *land flowing with milk and honey*, descriptive of its extraordinary fertility, furnishing in abundance all the necessities and luxuries of life. The falsity of these statements is however more than insinuated by Voltaire, who, in his History of the Crusades, represents Judea as having been, what he states it is "at present, one of the worst of all the inhabited countries of Asia, being almost entirely covered with parched rocks, with one layer of soil, and such as if cultivated might be compared to Switzerland." The parched rocks of which the French infidel speaks, are the range of secondary limestone, which constitutes, with but few interruptions, the external *envelope* of the globe. The assertion, that if properly cultivated Judea might rank with Switzerland in point of fertility, is totally destitute of proof; and is in fact quite opposed to the testimonies of those who have visited the country. Both Josephus and Aristæus§ ascribe to their native land an extraordinary fruitfulness; and though a national prejudice might incline them to speak favourably of the country of their birth, yet, when their testimony is corroborated by that of heathen authors, we are bound to receive it. Strabo speaks of several districts, especially about Jordan and Jericho, as fertile; though he represents the neighbourhood of Jerusalem as rocky.|| Hecateus, as cited by Josephus, describes Judea as one of the best and most fertile countries—*optimi et feracissimi soli*.¶ Tacitus tells us, that rain is seldom; that the soil is rich and fertile; that besides the fruits known in Italy, the palm and balm-tree flourish in great luxuriance.** P. de Valle, in his Letters, notices the exceeding beauty of the country, the fruitfulness not only of its valleys but of its mountainous districts, and the abundance which even its "parched rocks" would yield, if favoured with diligent culture.††

* Gen. xiii. 10.

† Gen. xxvii. 28.

‡ Num. xiii. 20, 27.

§ Joseph. Wars. lib. viii. c. 3. Aristæus. pp. 13, 14. Edit. Hody.

|| Strabo. lib. xvi.

¶ Joseph. cont. Ap. lib. i.

** Tacitus. Hist. lib. v. c. 6.

†† P. de Valle. Let. xiii.

The manner in which the most barren of the mountains were rendered fertile is exceedingly curious, and very fully described by Maundrell. The mountain was divided into different terraces, like steps rising one above another, upon which the soil was maintained by means of stone walls. "Of this form of culture," he observes, "you see evident footsteps, wherever you go, in all the mountains of Palestine. Thus the very rocks were made fruitful. And perhaps there is no spot of ground in this whole land, that was not formerly improved to the production of something or other, ministering to the sustenance of human life."* Even now, Dr. Shaw remarks that it yields a much more preferable crop than the very best part of the coast of Syria and Phenice. "Thus," says he, "the cotton that is gathered in the plains of Ramah, Esdraelon, and Zebulon, is in greater esteem than that which is cultivated near Sidon and Tripoly; neither is it possible for pulse, wheat, or any sort of grain, to be more excellent than what is commonly sold at Jerusalem." He farther mentions the "many tokens which are to be met with of the ancient vineyards about Jerusalem and Hebron," and "the great quantity of grapes and raisins, which are from thence brought daily to the markets of Jerusalem, and sent yearly to Egypt."† This declaration, we may observe, shows the fulfilment of the prophecy of Jacob, with reference to the temporal condition of Judah; "binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine, he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes; his eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk."‡

On his journey from Napolese to Jerusalem, Dr. Clarke observes, "the road was mountainous, rocky, and full of loose stones, yet the cultivation was everywhere marvellous." The limestone rocks and stony valleys "were entirely covered with plantations of figs, vines, and olive-trees; not a single spot seemed to be neglected. The hills, from their bases to their utmost summits, were overspread with gardens; all of these were free from weeds, and in the highest state of cultivation. Among the standing crops we noticed millet, cotton, linseed, and tobacco, and occasionally small fields of barley. A sight of this territory can alone convey any adequate idea of its surprising produce; it is truly the Eden of the East, rejoicing in the abundance of its wealth. Under a wise and beneficent government, the produce of the Holy Land would exceed all calculation. Its perennal harvest; the salubrity of its air; its limpid springs; its rivers, lakes, and matchless plains; its hills and vales: all these, added to the salubrity of its climate, prove the land to be, indeed, 'a field which the Lord had blessed.'§ In judging of the ancient

* Maundrell's Journey, pp. 64, 65.

† Shaw's Travels, p. 365.

‡ Gen. xlix. 11, 12.

§ Dr. E. D. Clarke's Travels, vol. iv. p. 283, oct. edit. Of the plain of Esdraelon, the old French traveller, Doubdan, writes: "Cette campagne est la plus, fertile, et le plus heureuse, pour la pasturages de toute la Terre Sainte, et porteroit de tres beaux grains, et en abondance, comme nos meilleures terres de France, si elle estoit cultivée."—Voy. p. 579.

representations of the land of Canaan, we must, however, remember that they are the statements of orientals, whose ideas of fertility are widely different from ours; in the productions of the vine, the fig-tree, and the olive, for which Judea was famous, an eastern would behold all his dreams of luxuriance amply realized.

The inspired poetry of the Hebrews abounds with glowing descriptions of the natural beauty and fertility of Judea; when, under a provident paternal government, it was celebrated in song and choral hymn as the glory of all lands.

"Thou lookest down upon our land and waterest it,
And makest it full of sheaves,
The river of God is full of water.
Thou preparest corn and tillest the land,
Thou waterest its furrows and softenest its clods;
Thou moistenest it with showers, thou blessest its springing,
Thou crownest the year with thy blessing,
And thy footsteps drop fatness.
They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness,
And the hills are encompassed with rejoicing;
The pastures are clothed with flocks,
And the fields are covered with corn:
All shout for joy and sing."*

"The springs arise among the valleys,
They run among the hills.
There the thirsty wild beast cools itself,
The wild ass quenches his thirst.
The fowls of heaven dwell beside them,
And sing among the branches.
He watereth the hills from the clouds above;
The fruit of his work satisfieth the earth.
He maketh grass to grow for cattle,
And herb for the service of man,
Preparing bread from the earth
And wine that maketh glad man's heart;
The fragrance of the oil for ointment,
And bread that giveth strength.
The cedars of Lebanon tall as heaven!
He has planted, he watereth them."†

In the Harleian Miscellany there is the narrative of an English pilgrim, who visited the Holy Land in the year 1660. He gives the following pious reasons for the existing sterility he witnessed, in comparison with its ancient productiveness:—"My opinion is, that when it was fruitful, and a land that flowed with milk and honey, in those days God blessed it, and that as then they followed his commandments; but now being inhabited by infidels, who profane the name of Christ, and live in all filthy and beastly manner, God curseth it, and so it is made barren; for it is so barren that I could get no bread when I came into it. One night, as I lodged short of Jerusalem, at a place called in the Arabian tongue Cuda Chenaleb, I sent out my moor to a house not far from the place where we had pitched our tents to get some bread, and he

* Psalm lxx.

† Psalm civ.

brought me word that there was no bread there to be had, and that the man of that house did never eat bread in all his life, but only dried dates, nor any of his household; whereby you may partly perceive the barrenness of the country at this day; only, as I suppose, by the curse of God that lyeth upon the same; for that they use the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah very much in that country, whereby the poor Christians who inhabit therein are glad to marry their daughters at twelve years of age unto Christians. And to conclude there is not that sin in the world, but it is used there among those infidels that now inhabit therein; and yet it is called Terra Sancta, and in the Arabian tongue Cuthea, which is the Holy Land, bearing the name only, and no more, for all holiness is clean banished from thence by those thieves, filthy Turks and infidels, that inhabit the same. Having my certificate sealed by the guardian, and a letter delivered unto me, to show that I had washed myself in the river Jordan, I departed from Jerusalem.”*

The mountains of Palestine were frequently made the scenes of idolatrous worship; its ancient occupiers, the Canaanites, participating in the general superstition, that by resorting to their summits they should obtain a nearer communication with heaven. Hence, when the king of Moab wanted to obtain an answer from God, he took Balaam the prophet, and brought him to the high places of Baal—probably artificial mounds. Baffled in that position he then took him to a natural eminence, in the field of Zophim, to the top of Pisgah; and foiled again here, he removed him to the loftier summit of Peor. Each of these places was made the scene of idolatrous rites, for “he erected seven altars, and offered a bullock and a ram on every altar.” The Jews caught the superstition from the heathen, when friendly alliances were formed with them, and frequently were they found ascending the lofty eminences in the land to call upon their false divinities. It is particularly observed of Pekah, the son of Remaliah, “that he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, yea, and made his sons pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen, and he sacrificed and burnt incense in the *high places*, and *on the hills*.”† Divine judgments were frequently threatened by the prophets for this proceeding:

“I will requite in their bosom their iniquities;
And the iniquities of their fathers together, saith Jehovah,
Who burnt incense on the mountains, and dishonoured me upon the hills:
Yea; I will pour into their bosom the full measure of their former deeds.”‡

Jeremiah remarks, that “in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills and from the multitude of mountains.”§ It was not, however, convenient, on domestic occasions, to undertake a journey to an eminence, perhaps, at the nearest, at some considerable dis-

* A true and strange Discourse of the Travels of Two English Pilgrims, what admirable Accidents befell them in their Journey towards Jerusalem, &c. Written by Henry Timberlake.

† 2 Kings xvi. 3, 4.

‡ Isaiah lxv. 1.

§ Jer. iii. 23.

tance, and therefore not to lose the advantages which elevation was supposed to give, the practice of resorting to the house-top suggested itself. Zephaniah speaks of worshipping "the host of heaven upon the house tops;"* and Josiah is said to have beaten down "the altars that were on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made."† This was a general custom with the Jews, during the idolatrous periods of their history, for they are denounced as

"A people who provoke me to my face continually;
Sacrificing in the gardens and burning incense on the tiles."‡

It is singular how widely the practice of hill-worship extended itself: it was the custom of the Persians, according to Strabo, and all the people of Cappadocia and Pontus. Mithridates, upon his war with the Romans, is said to have chosen one of the highest mountains in his dominions, upon the top of which he reared an immense hill equal in size to the summit on which it stood, and sacrificed to the god of armies. The pile was raised by his vassal princes, and, besides the customary offerings, wine, honey, and oil, with every species of aromatic, were presented. The fire is said to have been seen at the distance of a thousand stadia.§ Kämpfer relates that the Japanese temples, at the present day, are all sweetly seated upon eminences, the gods being supposed to delight in high and pleasant places; and Homer represents the hills and headlands as reciprocating the feeling and rejoicing at the birth of Apollo.||

To denote a mountain, and a chain or ridge of mountains, the Hebrews had but one word, *הר har*: to express, however, the latter idea, the term is sometimes used in the plural. Hence, Gilboa, which in the first book of Samuel is called a mountain, is denominated, in the second book, the mountains of Gilboa. Amos and Micah make use of the phrase, "the heights of the earth," *במתי ארץ*, for mountains.¶ For hills, the Hebrews had three terms, *גבעה*, *עפל*, *שפי*, *Gibua*, *Ophel*, *Shephi*; the latter is generally applied to a high place in the wilderness, a barren, bleak hill.**

The hilly character of Palestine originates some peculiar phraseology in Scripture. When Moses speaks of Israel's being put in possession of it, he thus expresses himself, "he made him ride on the high places of the earth;"†† and Ezekiel directs one of his prophecies to the "mountains of Israel," evidently intending to address the whole land.‡‡ The same prophet makes use of a very singular expression; he terms the Israelites the people who dwell in *טבור* the *navel* of the earth.§§ The phrase alludes to the elevated character of Palestine; for in the book of Judges, an army coming down from the top of the mountains is said to come down from the *navel* of the land.|||| The expression, as denoting the situation of a place, is not peculiar to the sacred writers: Cicero, when speak-

* Zeph. i. 5.

† 2 Kings xxiii. 12.

‡ Isaiah lxx. iii.

§ Appian de Bello Mith. p. 215.

|| Hymn to Apollo.

¶ Amos iv. 13. Micah i. 3.

** Jeremiah xiii. 12.

†† Deut. xxxiii. 13

‡‡ Ezek. xxxvi. 1.

§§ Ezek xxxviii. 12.

|||| Judges ix. 36, 37.

ing of the grove at Enna, says, "Qui locus, quod in medio est insulae situs, *umbilicus Siciliae* nominatur." Livy also has "*Ætoli umbilicum Græciæ* incolunt."*

The inspired writers refer to the mountains of Judea with a national fondness; upon the picturesque beauty of their father-land they dwell with evident delight; culling some of their choicest images from the heights of Lebanon, the excellency of Carmel, the dews of Hermon, or the temple-crowned hill of the Lord. When captives in the land of the stranger, they turned in utter loathing from the barbaric pomp of the heathen, to the remembrance of Zion as their chief joy; no sky was so bright to them as that which shone upon their native plains; and gracefully as the willows waved over the waters of the Euphrates, they charmed no song from the lips of the exiles, whose hearts were far away, communing with the rose of Sharon or the lily of the valley growing by the "river of God." Often in the pages of the Hebrew bards, do the high hills serve the purpose of embellishment and illustration. To describe the stability of the divine character, they tell us that "His righteousness is like the great mountains;" to express the perpetuity of the divine favour, they assure us that though the "mountains depart and the hills be removed, yet his loving-kindness shall not depart;" and to inspire confidence in the divine protection, they draw a parallel between the spiritual condition of the good man, and the natural site of their own metropolis:

"AS THE MOUNTAINS ARE ROUND ABOUT JERUSALEM, SO THE LORD IS ROUND ABOUT HIS PEOPLE, FROM HENCEFORTH EVEN FOR EVER."

* Cic. In Ver. Act ii. lib. iv. 48. Livy, xxxv. 18. The phrase is indeed most generally used to denote *centrality* as well as *elevation*. Strabo says that Delphi lay in the middle of all Greece, and according to some in the middle of the earth, whence *καὶ ἐκάλεσαν τῆς γῆς ὀμφαλόν*. Pindar says, in his 4th Pythian ode, that Delphi lies *πὰρ μέσον ὀμφαλὸν ἐδδίνδρω ματίρος*, i. e. of the earth. Cicero de Divinat. ii. 56, says, O sancte Apollo, qui *umbilicum certum terrarum* obsides. Ezekiel may therefore refer to the central situation, as well as the elevation of Palestine, though the latter interpretation is sanctioned by the use of the phrase in the book of Judges already cited. The notion that Jerusalem and the surrounding territory formed the centre of the earth was held by the ancient Jews and the early Christians. Theodoret remarks, in his Commentary upon Ezekiel, that God had chosen the Jews, in order through them to bless all nations. He had therefore assigned them an abode in the *middle of the earth*, so that all other people might learn from them piety and virtue; *ἔδωκεν δὲ αὐτοῖς καὶ τόπον εἰς οἰκῆτηριον τῆς οἰκουμένης τὰ μέσα* — — *ἐν ᾧ ἑαυτοὶ τὴν ἀπὸ τούτης ὀφελίαν λαύσωσι, καὶ πᾶσαν ἐνοσίβειαν καὶ ἐνομοίαν παρ' αὐτοῖς μετασώσωσιν*. So also Jerom in loc. *Jerusalem in medio mundi sitam, hic idem propheta testatur, umbilicum terræ eam esse demonstrans*.

Victorinus of Poitou says, in the poem of the Cross,

Est locus, ex omni *medium* quem credimus orbe,
Golgatha Judæi patrio cognomine dicunt.

In the Syriac liturgy of the Antiochian church, the following words occur at the festival of the adoration of the Holy Cross, "Our Lord hung high upon the cross, ܥܠ ܥܕܢܐ ܥܠ ܥܕܢܐ ܥܠ ܥܕܢܐ ܥܠ ܥܕܢܐ and embraced the four ends (or quarters of heaven) in the middle of the earth."

R E V I E W.

The Works of Thomas Chalmers, D.D. LL.D. Professor of Theology in the University of Edinburgh. New Edition, 12mo. Vols. I—IV. Glasgow: William Collins.

GREAT have been the recent revolutions in the book trade. Cheapness, combined with elegance, is the universal order of the day, and historians, poets, novelists, who used to come out in two guinea quartos, or fifteen shilling octavos, or even twelve shilling duodecimos, are now compressed into little five shilling volumes, each of which often contains nearly twice as much as was formerly sold for the same sum. Even the most *aristocratic* authors, (we refer exclusively to *literary* rank,) who used to find no difficulty in disposing of several editions of fair octavos, are now, one and all, transmigrating into this humble, but still beautiful and attractive form; a form which, though it may in some cases abridge the profits of *booksellers* and *writers*, secures incalculable benefits to the world of *readers*. Even as it respects *profit*, however, (which, though a matter of very little importance to the *reader*, is a point of considerable moment to the *author*,) we apprehend that a writer of any considerable celebrity is hardly like to lose much; the increased sale generally affording full compensation for a more moderate profit on the individual article.

While these modern cheap editions may almost vie with their predecessors in point of elegance, there cannot be a greater contrast than between the comparatively slender margins and well-filled pages of the former, and the fair, broad margins and narrow strips of type which characterized the latter; the pages of which strongly remind one of the fantastic dress of our bishops,—a sort of mimicry of the wide lawn sleeves and the little black apron.

Whilst the generality of our more distinguished voluminous authors are not cheapened and *popularized* till after their death, some few of them have undertaken (in our opinion wisely) a complete and revised edition of their works during their own lifetime; they have not left to injudicious friends and literary undertakers the task of taking care of their fame; and this is right. To give their works a last and finishing touch, to improve them by a calm and deliberate revisal, seems, at once, due to their own reputation, and to the laudable desire that their productions should be as perfect and as useful as possible. In this, as in every respect, it becomes a wise and good man to “set his house in order before he dies.”

We are glad, therefore, to find Dr. Chalmers (who has undoubtedly been one of the most powerful, influential, and what is still better, *useful* writers of his age,) undertaking a complete and revised edition of his somewhat voluminous productions. Nor is it, as the reader will perceive, merely a *reprint*; as stated in the prospectus, “the series is to contain several new works in addition to those

already published — which, at the same time, it will be the author's best care both to mature and to remodel." The *additions*, it appears, will be for the most part, if not wholly, of a theological character, and will be on *such topics*, and combined with the author's previous works *in such a manner*, as to form something like a systematic exhibition of his views on all the principal points of theology. The only considerable defect connected with the editing of the work, and the observation applies equally to the new and the old matter, is that the pruning-knife has not been used as it ought. The Doctor has in numberless instances indulged in his besetting fault of prolixity to very wearisomeness. His works would, in our opinion, be ten times as compact and forcible, if he had struck out somewhat more than one-fourth of the matter.

Of the general peculiarities of Dr. Chalmers' mind, little need be said by us, since they are stamped so deeply on every one of his works, and since those works have long been in the hands of every one. There is probably no writer of the present day, whose mental idiosyncrasy is so strongly marked as that of this great man. His speculative and reasoning powers are undoubtedly very considerable; still they are not the qualities by which he is most strongly characterized. His most distinctive attribute is his exuberant imagination. This faculty seems never tired or exhausted, however numerous the modes in which it has exhibited and illustrated the same truths.

No man seizes a single point more strongly, or illustrates it more forcibly than he does; but we question whether he can be called comprehensive; at all events, he seldom takes, *in one view*, a comprehensive survey of all the relations and bearings of any complicated subject. To give us any such comprehensive view, it seems requisite for him to treat it at different periods, and in a series of distinct disquisitions; *one point at a time* being generally as much as the author consents to treat us with. He depicts a landscape not in one large painting, but in a *series* of views.—This we apprehend is the cause of his two principal failings. The first is his tendency, while solely occupied with the principle or truth which he immediately designs to illustrate, to express himself too strongly; to attach an undue importance to that principle or truth, instead of nicely discriminating the limits which it should occupy by a *simultaneous* reference to those other points in the great system of truth which are related to it. A remarkable instance of this was given in his work on "The Evidences of Christianity," as first published. Impressed with the great truth that the historical evidence was both the clearest and most conclusive, he proceeded to repudiate every other as unworthy of consideration, or at least acted as though he thought so, by exclusively limiting his work to that one line of argument. Impressed with the great truth, that the moral system of the divine government is too vast and complicated to permit us adequately to judge of what it is fit or unfit for the Supreme Being to do, he hastily pushed this principle to its extreme, and appeared to deny that there could be *any* internal evidence for Christianity, founded on the nature and character of that moral system which it unfolds

to us;—as though because we were incompetent judges of the *whole* of the divine administration, we were therefore also totally ignorant of the general principles by which it must be *eternally* impressed, and of the *general character* which must always belong to it; or as though because we could not see the wisdom and propriety of *all* that was revealed, no notice was to be taken of the numberless instances in which we *can* discern such wisdom and propriety; instances which taken together might still form (whatever the remaining mysteries) a strong presumptive argument that Christianity is divine. This error, we admit, Dr. Chalmers has thoroughly remedied in the present edition of his works, and, as we shall have occasion presently to remark, has acknowledged that his former views were partial and defective.

The above-mentioned tendency of mind, viz. to give for the moment an undue prominence and exclusive importance to any one point which happens to seize the attention, is not easily characterized by any single word in our language, but the Germans have a word which precisely answers to it—we mean the word *einsitigkeit*, literally *one-sidedness*.

The other failing to which the above-mentioned tendency of mind leads, is the disposition to dwell too long upon any one topic, to iterate and re-iterate the same sentiment, not only after it has been made *perspicuous*, but long after it has been expressed with all the *force and energy* which the author can impart to it. This tendency in Dr. Chalmers' case is greatly strengthened by the exuberance and splendour of his imagination, which keeps presenting him with a series of illustrations, each so beautiful and captivating, that he seems to have no heart to resist them; although he must well know that it is a principle of sound criticism in argumentative composition, that mere illustration is a fault when the meaning has once been made *perspicuous* and *impressive*. Hence the weariness of which a reflective reader of Dr. Chalmers (and none *can* read him who is not in some measure reflective) is apt to complain if he reads much of his writings at a time. One is continually tempted to exclaim, "Well, that point is very clear; that is abundantly plain; but what comes next?" and when he finds that the next paragraph,—and the next,—and the next, still present him with the same thoughts in different forms, he gets almost out of patience.

We apprehend that this failing is in a great measure to be attributed to our author's not having sufficiently kept in mind the distinction which should always be maintained between compositions for the pulpit and compositions for the press. A diffuseness, a repetition, an exuberance of illustration, which would be effective in the former, become intolerable in the latter.

In spite of all this, however, we cannot but feel that the writings of this justly-celebrated writer are calculated to be eminently useful; that they have been a great blessing to the church; and that they *will* be so. If we have expressed our opinion on his defects *strongly*, it is principally because he has, like every other great man, raised up a "vile herd" of imitators who affect his manner and mimic his style, without the slightest pretensions to his power of intellect and

splendour of imagination. It is necessary that our young writers and preachers (large classes of them have been and will be diligent students of his writings) should be faithfully warned that the things which they are imitating, and which are the only things they *can* imitate, are not the excellencies, but the defects of their master.

The four volumes now before us contain, of Dr. Chalmers' previously published writings, the work "on Natural Theology," (published in the series of the "Bridgewater Treatises;") and the work "on the Christian Evidences;" both, however, augmented by a great deal of new and valuable matter, preliminary and supplementary. The portions of the new matter by which we have been most struck, are chapters I. III. and IV. of Book I.; "of the distinctions between the ethics of theology and the objects of theology," and "of the metaphysics which have been resorted to on the side of theism." On the last of these topics, especially, he examines, with great power and acuteness, "Mr. Hume's objection to the *a posteriori* argument for the being of God, founded on the assertion that the world is a singular effect." He shows, in our opinion, conclusively, that the answers of Reid and Stewart, (who attribute our inference of *design* from its *effects*, to an original and ultimate principle of our nature) are unsatisfactory, and that this principle is itself resolvable into another and more general law of the mental constitution, namely, an instinctive belief in the constancy of nature. At the same time we are much mistaken, if the principle at which our author stops, is not itself capable, by further analysis, of being resolved into a still more general law, embracing all those phenomena to which he refers, and a great many beside. But whether this be so or not, the conclusiveness of the Doctor's reasoning remains precisely the same,—there being an unquestionable tendency in man to believe in this constancy of nature, whether that principle which constitutes such belief has an *exclusive* and *special* reference to that class of phenomena, or not.

As the Bridgewater Treatise has been in another shape long before the public, and as we have nearly exhausted the space to which this article must be restricted, we refrain from offering any lengthened remarks upon it: powerful and original as are many of the views it contains, it appears to us far from having exhausted the subject.

It is the work "on the Christian Evidences" to which the most valuable accessions have been made in the present edition of Dr. Chalmers' works. The first "Book" is taken up by "Preliminary Considerations," "on the cognizance which the understanding takes of its own processes," "on man's instinctive belief in the constancy of nature," and "on the sufficiency of human testimony for the proof of miracles," as preparatory to a very full and able refutation of Hume's celebrated argument. In this our author fairly shows that Campbell's attempt to refer our "faith in testimony" to a principle *sui generis*—an original instinct of the mind—is unsuccessful, and inclines to refer it with Hume to our faith in the constancy of nature; he then undertakes to show that Hume's *conclusion* is false, though his *premises* were allowed to be right.

This we think is Dr. Chalmers' great merit, in this portion of his work. He has removed some false, or, at least, questionable arguments, which had previously been employed; and has fully investigated the *origin* of the whole controversy. Yet we can by no means allow what he *appears* to affirm (while complimenting the *practical* sagacity of English theologians at the expense of their speculative powers) that Paley and others have contented themselves with giving a correct judgment on the case, without giving the *principle* of their judgment. They have, with Campbell, in numberless cases, clearly *anatomized* the argument, and *demonstrated* its fallacy. Those fallacies consist in the shuffling substitution of the experience of the *individual* for *universal* experience, and the confounding together of all species of testimony, without the slightest reference to their relative value:—fallacies so enormous as to justify the contempt with which this argument (so shallow, if Hume were sincere, or so dishonest, if he were not,) has sometimes been treated. It is true that the generality of our English authors have not gone so far back as Dr. Chalmers has done, and we thank him for having gone further; but we must distinctly deny that this is at all essential. Not only may that *practical* reply, which is all that our author has quoted from Paley, be given without any such discussions, but a full *logical* refutation of it.—We must observe, that the chapter “on man’s instinctive belief in the constancy of nature” might have been for the most part spared, as the author had so fully explained himself on that topic in the first volume on “Natural Theology.” We have remarked that many of the same illustrations are employed, and some of the sentences repeated almost word for word.

By the additional chapters on the “Moral Evidence for the truth of the New Testament,” on the “Experimental Evidence of the truth of Christianity,” and “on the Portable Character of the Evidence for the truth of Christianity,” Dr. Chalmers appears to us to have completely remedied what was always, in our view, the grand defect of his original work. These topics, it is well known, were left *entirely untouched* in the work as it originally stood, and even up to the seventh edition. One may therefore reasonably suppose that a considerable change has taken place in our author’s views: and that, as such is the case, a distinct acknowledgment of this may be found in the present volumes. Certainly such an exhibition of candour can do nothing to depreciate our author in the opinion of any reflective man; but, on the contrary, greatly to raise him. *And we rejoice that he has not hesitated candidly to avow this change of opinion; though we regret that it is not inserted in the body of the old work, but in a preliminary chapter on the “Connexion between the Doctrine and the Miracle.”* We have been particular in mentioning this, that the reader may not be betrayed into the unworthy suspicion that the excellent author has been *ashamed* to retract or qualify a rash opinion. The following passage will be read with interest.

“The historical evidence for these miraculous facts were enough of themselves to constitute a simple but solid foundation on which to rest the whole super-

structure of our creed. We confess our partiality, in other days, to what we held as a beautiful and consistent exemplification of the question between us and infidels. There is nothing, however, which has contributed more to modify our views upon this subject than the very question whereof we now treat. Instead of holding all religions as suspended on the miraculous evidence, we see this evidence itself standing at the bar of an anterior principle, and there waiting for its authentication. There is a previous natural religion on whose aid we call for the determination of this matter. It is an authority that we at one time should have utterly disregarded and condemned, but now hold it in higher reverence, since, reflecting on the supremacy of conscience within us, we deem this to be the token of an ascendant principle of morality and truth in the universe around us."—Vol. iii. p. 385.

We consider these admissions equally honourable to the author and valuable to the cause of truth; honourable to the author, because they show that he is far more attached to truth than to his own opinions, and valuable to the cause of truth, inasmuch as they contain a striking homage to the power of the internal evidence, offered as it is by one who certainly cannot be supposed to have embraced it from a blind partiality, or upon slight consideration.

The Doctor, however, still declares his unmitigated hostility to a certain species of internal evidence, which he says he regards as "most precarious." It is evident that he refers to the attempts to show that the more specific and mysterious doctrines of Christianity are in harmony with those of reason. But is it true that the writers who have indulged in such speculations, have ever, properly speaking, *intended* that such defences should be considered, in any strict sense, as a part of the *internal evidences* at all. Certainly *we* do not ask for any *more internal evidence* than that which our author admits to be valid. And we apprehend, after we have deducted all that he has argued for, there will remain very little, if any thing, which authors have ever considered a part of the *moral internal evidence* in any intelligible sense. For example; he tells us, that there is "an evidence arising from the ethical system of the gospel;" an evidence "arising not from the witnesses themselves, but from the *subject matter* of their testimony;" he tells us that "the *morality* of the gospel might be held as a demonstration, at least as a likelihood of having proceeded from God, with whose character it is in such full and marvellous accordance. For that system of virtue which recommends itself to the *consciences* of men, must also recommend itself to their *notions* of the Godhead." He tells us that there is "an evidence grounded on the accordance which obtains between the representations of the Bible, and our own previous notions of the Deity." He tells us that there is "an evidence grounded on the accordancy, which obtains between what the Bible says we are, and what we find ourselves to be;" an evidence grounded "on the accordancy between what the Bible overtures to us for our acceptance, and what we feel ourselves to need;" he also speaks of the "doctrinal as a branch of the internal evidence of Christianity, as consisting in certain symphonies or adaptations of part to part, which might serve to recommend it, as founded in wisdom, or as having a real foundation in the nature of things." Now if these and such like topics be deducted from what we have always considered the *moral* internal evidence, many

persons would naturally ask what is *that* species of internal evidence to which our author still affirms other writers have given such an injudicious prominence? We cannot help suspecting our worthy author has hastily confounded what have been merely intended as *replies* to the specific objections of infidels, (still leaving Christianity to rest on its immoveable basis of external and internal evidence,) with the design of furnishing a distinct *species of internal evidence*.

The attempt, for example, which he blames in Leland and others, to set up a *rational* defence of those mysteries of Christianity, "those apparent incongruities in the system," which the infidel alleges to be inconsistent with the character and government of God, is not surely an attempt to establish a peculiar kind of *internal evidence* of Christianity. Such defences, we quite agree with him, have often been exceedingly injudicious and presumptuous; we also admit with him, that since Christianity is established on its *appropriate evidences*, its truth is in no case to be suspended on the success of any such attempts. Still they are not put forth as any part of the *evidences* of Christianity, strictly so called, (or if they ever are, we willingly give them up;) they are merely intended to show that such and such doctrines, *not* being irrational or absurd, ought not to operate as a bar to the reception of the proper evidences; they are defences superadded to the proper evidences. Though it is quite true that they have often been *eminently injudicious* defences; though we should deprecate, as much as Dr. Chalmers, making the truth of Christianity to depend upon such defences; and though the Christian can in no case, *by the laws of fair argument*, be called upon to solve the difficulties to which they refer, we can by no means concur in the indiscriminate censure which Dr. Chalmers casts upon such attempts. We think that, *wherever it is possible*, it is well to show, over and above demonstrating the truth of Christianity by its proper evidences, that the doctrines to which the infidel objects are not fairly open to his objections. We are bound to do this when we can, not because we are *argumentatively* obliged to do it, or because the *true* grounds of Christianity would be a whit less strong if it were *not* done, but in charity; that, *so far as possible*, every semblance of objection, every ground of prejudice, every stumbling-block may be removed out of the objector's way. That the attempt has often been injudiciously made, we have admitted; that it can never be more than partially successful we also admit; but to proscribe such attempts altogether, on the ground that when we have demonstrated Christianity to be true, on its proper and legitimate evidence, we cannot, *by the strict laws of logic*, be called upon to do more, appears, to say the least, very rash; while the representing of any such charitable and well-meant attempts, as originating in a desire to set up a species of *positive internal evidence*, we cannot but look upon as a gross confusion of language.

But whether our author has expressed himself quite clearly upon this point or not, we must once more declare our delight, that he has reconsidered and revised his opinions on the subject of the internal evidence generally, and has done such ample justice to the topics he

had dismissed so summarily in the preceding editions. We cannot but think that the three last chapters of the fourth book, on these topics, by far the most important and impressive portion of the two volumes; and though the subjects have been often treated before, our author has managed to introduce into the discussion of them *very considerable originality*. We think the author especially happy in those parts in which he speaks of the resistless evidence which gradually dawns on the mind of the diligent and conscientious student of the scripture, from the page of scripture itself, as well as in the treatment of the experimental evidence, strictly so called. While these *particular portions* of the internal evidence cannot be exhibited in controversy with the infidel, (with whom the historical argument is, undoubtedly, the *principal* thing;) there cannot be a question that they will form to the *Christian* a far stronger and more irresistible demonstration that the gospel is divine, than all that Lardner and Paley have ever written. We are convinced that our readers will thank us for laying before them the following forcible and eloquent passages :

“ This reasoning might be prosecuted further. Other examples might be given in detail, of high wisdom and principle, not humanly to be expected in the state and circumstances of the apostles ; and which, therefore, as bordering on the miraculous, or perhaps as fully realizing this character, might well be proposed as distinct credentials for the divinity of the New Testament. But the morality of the gospel might be viewed in another light, than merely as an exhibition on the part of its messengers—approving themselves to be singularly, and, perhaps, supernaturally gifted men. It might be viewed in immediate connexion with God, or held as a demonstration, at least as a likelihood of having proceeded from him, with whose character it is in such full and marvellous accordance. For that system of virtue which recommends itself to the consciences of men, must also recommend itself to their notions of the God-head. The chief argument of nature, as we have already attempted to prove, for the character of the Divinity, is the character of that law which has been graven by his own hands on the tablet of our moral nature. That to which we do homage in the system of virtue, is also that to which we do homage in God as the living exemplar of it, and on the principle that himself must be adorned by the virtues which he has taught us to admire. It is thus that we personify the ethical system into a being, or pass from the character of the law to the character of the lawgiver. We fully esteem and accredit God as author of the law of conscience ; and should it correspond with the law of a professed revelation, more especially if it be a revelation by which the conscience itself has been greatly enlightened and enlarged, do we recognise the probability at least, if not the certainty of its having come from God.

“ But we can imagine more than this. We can imagine a reader of the Bible to be visited with the resistless yet legitimate conviction, amounting to a strongly felt and immediate sense that God has spoken to him there—inasmuch that he feels himself to be in as direct correspondence with God, uttering his own words to him, as with an earthly friend, when engaged in the perusal of a letter, which he knows to be the authentic production of him from whom it professes to have come. It may be difficult to convince those who have never thus been visited by any such direct or satisfying revelation, that there is no fancy or fanatical illusion in the confidence of those who profess to have been made the subjects of it. And yet they may be helped to conceive aright of it by certain illustrations. Those Jews who heard our Saviour, and testified that he spake as one having authority, had at first hand an argument for his divine mission, which they could not adequately survey or explain the grounds of to

another. The officers of the Sanhedrim, who were sent to apprehend Jesus, yet refrained from touching him, 'because,' as they reported, 'never man spake like this man,' had also an evidence, which, however powerfully and warrantably felt in their own minds, they could not by any statement pass entire into the minds of other men. The centurion who was present at the crucifixion of the Saviour, and who, from what he heard and saw of the tone, and aspect, and manner of the divine sufferer, testified that this surely was the Son of God, may have received, through the vehicle of his senses, a deep and a just persuasion, which yet, by no testimony of his, could be borne with full effect, and so as to give the same persuasion to those who were distant from the scene. And, in like manner, the men who were not able to resist the spirit and the wisdom wherewith Stephen spake, may have felt a great deal more than they could tell; yet not a groundless or imaginative feeling, but a rightful impression, which it would have been well if they had acted on, that he spake with the truth and authority of an inspired man. In all these cases, we admit the possibility of such tokens having been exhibited, as might give to the parties who were present a strong and intimate persuasion, not the less solid, that it was only felt by themselves and incommunicable to others. The solitary visitant of some desert and before unexplored island, has good reason for believing in the reality of the scenes and spectacles before him, though no other eyes ever witnessed them but his own. And so, too, in the person of a celestial messenger, there might, for aught we know, be such real though indescribable symptoms of the character wherewith he is invested. Such undoubted signatures of wisdom, and authority, and truth; such a thorough aspect of sacredness; such traits of a divinity in every look and every utterance; that, though not capable of being made the subject of a public argument, or of being reported to the satisfaction of others, might, nevertheless, awaken a most honest, and homefelt, and withal sound conviction in the hearts of those who were the witnesses of such a present and personal manifestation, and who themselves saw with their eyes, and heard with their ears, what they could not make other understandings than their own to conceive.

"Now the question is, whether those characters of truth and of power, which we now imagine to have been in the oral testimony, might not have been translated into the written testimony—or whether that palpable evidence embodied in the personal history, and in the words of our Saviour as he spake them upon earth, and of which the hearers took immediate cognizance, might not be fixed and substantiated in the Bible that he left behind him, and be there taken immediate cognizance of by the readers of the Bible. Certain it is, that the *prima facie* evidence, the first aspect of that verisimilitude which lies in the obvious sacredness and honesty of Scripture, is greatly heightened by our intent and our prolonged regards to it. The man who devotes himself in the spirit of a thorough moral earnestness to the perusal of Scripture, feels a growing homage in his heart to the sanctity, the majesty, and the authority which beam upon him from its pages—and in more conspicuous light, and with more commanding effect, the longer that this holy exercise is persevered in. And the question recurs—might not this growing probability grow into a complete and irresistible certainty at the last? Might not the verisimilitude ripen and be confirmed into the full assurance of a verity? If in the course of actual experience it be found that we do meet with daily accession to this evidence—how are we to know that there is not as much of the evidence in reserve, as shall at length overpower the mind into a settled yet sound conviction, that verily God is in the Bible of a truth? It is no condemnation of this evidence, that, only seen by those who have thus reached their way to it, it has not yet come within the observation of others who are behind them, who have not given the same serious and sustained attention to the Bible, or not so much made it the book of their anxious and repeated perusals—nor their right understanding of the book, the subject of their devoutest prayers. It is true, the resulting evidence is of that personal and peculiar quality, which cannot be translated in all its

proper force and clearness into the mind of another—yet may it be a good and a solid evidence notwithstanding—as much so as the ocular evidence for the reality of some isolated spot which I alone have been admitted to see, and which no human eyes but my own have ever once beheld. The evidence is not at all weakened by this monopoly. To myself it is every way as satisfying and strong as if thousands shared in it. At least, irrespective of them, the conviction on my own separate and independent view of the object of the question, may have been so perfect, as to require no additions. Yet, if not an addition, there is at least a pleasing harmony in the experience of men, who have been admitted to the view along with me. We might be strengthened and confirmed by our mutual assurance of a reality in things unknown to all but ourselves, and which to the generality of the world abide in deepest secrecy. And such too the sympathy, such the confirmation felt by ‘the peculiar people,’ in their converse with each other. They are a chosen generation, and have been translated out of darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel—each having the witness within himself, yet all prizing the discovery, when, on talking one to another, they find the consistency and the oneness of a common manifestation.”—Vol. iv. pp. 67–72.

We must now dismiss these volumes of Dr. Chalmers, which we do with a full acknowledgment of the valuable new matter which they contain, and especially of the great improvements effected in the treatise “on the Evidences of Christianity.”

We shall look with considerable curiosity for the remaining volumes of this valuable edition; more especially for the promised new sermons, and the volumes on the “Doctrines of Christianity,” selected from the Doctor’s Lectures to the Senior Theological Class at the university of Edinburgh.

Geology and Mineralogy considered with Reference to Natural Theology, by the Rev. Dr. Buckland. 2 vols. 8vo. pp. 727. Plates. London: Pickering. 1836.

THIS is the last, in many respects the most original, and as a whole decidedly the best of the Bridgewater Treatises. It is well known that the late Earl of Bridgewater, who died a few years ago, devised eight thousand pounds sterling to be paid by certain trustees to any person or persons appointed by the late President of the Royal Society, to write and publish one thousand copies of a work on the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, as manifested in the creation. That gentleman, Davies Gilbert, Esq. obtained the assistance of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London in determining upon the best method of securing the proposed object. But it is now almost generally admitted that the intention of the donor has been most imperfectly carried into effect. Instead of one book, eight separate treatises have been given to the world, by as many different authors, in twelve octavo volumes, exhibiting every variety of style, containing numberless repetitions, and not a few contradictions. Moreover, these treatises are sold at higher prices than booksellers would have charged, had they published them as speculations of their own. Now we venture to assert, that if the trustees had so managed the application of the funds as to produce, by competition, or otherwise, one able and comprehensive work, at a cheap rate, they would have insured its wide diffusion among that class of the community

which stands most in need of such instruction; have rendered good service to the cause of natural theology and of revealed truth, and have fulfilled more completely the design of the late Earl. As it now is, the works are so expensive, the publishing price is £7. 16s. 6d., that comparatively few persons will purchase them, and so voluminous, that still fewer will be able carefully, to peruse them.* It is to be lamented that some of these treatises betray such marks of carelessness and haste, of languor and indifference, as might be expected in writers who have a given task assigned to them, without much regard to their own inclination. Yet with all the disadvantages and defects attendant upon the plan which has been pursued, the Bridgewater Treatises possess great merit; and the one by Professor Whewell on Astronomy and general Physics, considered with reference to Natural Theology, displays considerable research and power in the whole argument, which is conducted to a triumphant conclusion.

It is not our intention to write a review of this physico-theological series, but to invite the attention of our readers to the contents of Dr. Buckland's volumes which have recently issued from the press. They treat confessedly on a subject of great interest, and discuss a science, if it can yet claim that name, in which the public are more than ordinarily interested, in consequence of the rapid disclosures it has made of the animal remains of a former world, and of the severity with which some zealots have attacked its conclusions, as though they were inimical to the statements of revelation. The spirit of sectarian hatred and ecclesiastical intolerance which denounced Dr. Hampden, as heterodox in divinity and ethics, has hurled its envenomed darts at the Canon of Christchurch, and the Reader in Geology and Mineralogy in the University of Oxford,—the learned author of the work before us. It may be justly deemed matter of surprise, that men investing themselves with the attributes of learning and religion, should regard with suspicion the study of natural phenomena. Yet it has ever thus happened to those who have trod the early and deliberate steps of scientific discovery; they have been misunderstood and misrepresented. The persecutors of Galileo conceived there was danger to religion in the discoveries of a science in which Newton and Kepler found demonstration of the most sublime natural perfections of the Creator. We believe, however, that opposition between science and revelation is absolutely impossible, when the facts in nature are correctly observed, and divine truth is correctly interpreted. This has been proved in many cases, and will ere long, we believe, be admitted

* What a striking contrast to all this is presented in the management of a small bequest made by a young enthusiast in Phrenological pursuits, Mr. W. R. Henderson. He wished to promote the circulation of that dubious book, *Coombe's Constitution of Man*, which, we believe, was originally published in octavo, at ten shillings; but his trustees realizing his funds, assigned a sum sufficient for publishing an edition of 2000 copies at *half-a-crown*, and now we see that it is obtaining a still wider circulation, by the means of an *eighteen-penny edition*, for intelligent "individuals of the poorer classes and mechanics' institutions." Why has not the munificence of Lord Bridgewater been thus employed to provide a healthful aliment for the minds of that important portion of the community?

in reference to geology. This consummation will assuredly be hastened by the treatise of Dr. Buckland. A more suitable author than the learned professor could scarcely have been appointed to produce such a work as this, having devoted, as he has, the greater part of his life to the study of the mineral structure of the earth, and being advantageously known to the learned world by the publication of his inaugural lecture at Oxford, seventeen years ago, and by his subsequent elaborate work entitled *Reliquiæ Diluvianæ*.

The present work exhibits the author's characteristic zeal and ardour in the pursuit of science, and cannot fail to repay the attention expended in its careful perusal. Its numerous facts are clearly and perspicuously stated, and well arranged; and its inductions, with few exceptions, are fair and legitimate inferences. The author's design is thus announced :

"Three important subjects of enquiry in Natural Theology come under consideration in the present Treatise.

"The first regards the inorganic Elements of the Mineral kingdom, and the actual dispositions of the Materials of the Earth: many of these, although produced or modified by the agency of violent and disturbing forces, afford abundant proofs of wise and provident Intention, in their adaptations to the uses of the Vegetable and Animal Kingdoms, and especially to the condition of Man.

"The second relates to Theories which have been entertained respecting the Origin of the World and the derivation of existing systems of organic Life, by an eternal succession, from preceding individuals of the same species; or by gradual transmutation of one species into another. I have endeavoured to show, that to all these Theories the phenomena of Geology are decidedly opposed.

"The third extends into the Organic Remains of a former World the same kind of investigation which Paley has pursued with so much success in his examination of the evidences of Design in the mechanical structure of the corporeal frame of Man, and of the inferior Animals which are placed with him on the present surface of the Earth."—pp. vii. viii.

About a hundred pages of the work are devoted to an examination of the first two points indicated in the above arrangement, and the remaining portion is occupied by a minute investigation of those myriads of petrified remains, which are disclosed by the researches of geology, and which appear to have been made up, like living organic bodies, of "clusters of contrivances," which demonstrate the exercise of stupendous intelligence and power. We regard this as a most successful application of the principle employed by Ray, Derham, and Paley, and used in this case in reference to classes of objects but recently brought to light; inasmuch as it not only strengthens the general argument against Atheism and Polytheism, but supplies a chain of connected evidence of the continuous being, and unchanging perfections of the one living and true God.

Among the first chapters in the book, which may be regarded as introductory, is one of great value, on the "consistency of geological discoveries with sacred history;" in which the author shows, that while these discoveries require some modification of the commonly received interpretation of the Mosaic narrative, this admission neither involves any impeachment of the sacred text, nor of the judgment of those who formerly interpreted it, in the absence of facts that have but recently been brought to light. An examination of the several hypo-

theses proposed for reconciling the brief account of Moses with acknowledged facts is then instituted; and the author comes to precisely the same conclusion, as that stated in some geological essays recently inserted in our Magazine. We cite his opinion.

"The first verse of Genesis therefore seems explicitly to assert the creation of the Universe; 'the heaven,' including the sidereal systems; and the earth more especially specifying our own planet, as the subsequent scene of the operations of the six days about to be described: no information is given as to events which may have occurred on this earth, unconnected with the history of man, between the creation of its component matter recorded in the first verse, and the era at which its history is resumed in the second verse; nor is any limit fixed to the time during which these intermediate events may have been going on; millions of millions of years may have occupied the indefinite interval, between the beginning in which God created the heaven and the earth, and the evening or commencement of the first day of the Mosaic narrative."—pp. 21, 22.

The interpretation is not a forced one, intended to harmonize with a mere speculation, but one which is in itself reasonable, and in accordance with well ascertained facts, inasmuch as the transition, secondary, and tertiary series of rocks exhibit organic remains, which clearly had an existence before the creation of man; while the primary stratified rocks are totally destitute of such fossils. The evidence derived from these phenomena, in favour of natural theology, is thus stated:

"—they clearly point out to us a period antecedent to the habitable state of the earth, and consequently antecedent to the existence of its inhabitants. When our minds become thus familiarized with the idea of a beginning and first creation of the beings we see around us, the proofs of design, which the structure of those beings affords, carry with them a more forcible conviction of an intelligent Creator, and the hypothesis of an eternal succession of causes, is thus at once removed. We argue thus: it is demonstrable from Geology that there was a period when no organic beings had existence; these organic beings must therefore have had a beginning subsequently to this period; and where is that beginning to be found but in the will and fiat of an intelligent and all wise Creator?"—pp. 58, 59.

An objection has often been raised to the Mosaic narrative by sceptical writers, that it gives no detailed account of geological phenomena. It would be quite as reasonable to object, that it makes no specific mention of the satellites of Jupiter, or of the rings of Saturn. The objection is ably met and satisfactorily disposed of by Dr. Buckland. He says,

"We may fairly ask of those persons, who consider physical science a fit subject for revelation, what point they can imagine short of a communication of Omniscience, at which such a revelation might have stopped, without imperfections of omission less in degree, but similar in kind, to that which they impute to the existing narrative of Moses? A revelation of so much only of astronomy, as was known to Copernicus, would have seemed imperfect after the discoveries of Newton; and a revelation of the science of Newton would have appeared defective to La Place: a revelation of all the chemical knowledge of the eighteenth century, would have been as deficient in comparison with the information of the present day, as what is now known in this science will probably appear before the termination of another age; in the whole circle of sciences there is not one to which this argument may not be extended, until we should require from revelation a full developement of all the mysterious agencies that uphold the mechanism of the material world."—p. 15.

It is further argued, that such a revelation would be unsuited to human nature as at present constituted; and at variance with the avowed end of all divine disclosures, which has not been to impart intellectual knowledge, but saving truth.

In pursuance of the main design proposed in this treatise, the author examines the composition of various rocks; their relation to each other, the relations of the earth and its inhabitants to man, and finds in each of these particulars abundant evidence of design, indicating the presiding influence of supreme intelligence. But it is amid the relics of a past creation, that the Doctor has most successfully discovered those proofs of design, which give completeness to the whole system of organic nature, and confirm human faith in the wisdom, goodness, and constant agency of a great first cause. For us to present even an epitome of the multifarious and interesting details brought forward in this examination would be impracticable in our limits. The secrets of nature revealed in the fossil organic remains, are truly astonishing, and cannot fail to interest deeply all who study them. We must, however, content ourselves with an extract or two, which may be sufficient to show the scope of the whole argument. In the anatomy of the ancient animals, which geologists have examined, there are found organs for capturing and killing their prey; and as contrivances for destruction may seem inconsistent with the benevolence of the Creator, who is supposed to dispense the greatest amount of enjoyment to the greatest number of individuals; it is argued by the Professor that the aggregate of animal enjoyment is increased, and that of pain diminished by the existence of carnivorous races. The following passage will show the strength of the argument.

"—it is a dispensation of kindness to make the end of life to each individual, as easy as possible. The most easy death is proverbially that which is least expected; and though for moral reasons peculiar to our own species, we deprecate the sudden termination of our mortal life, yet in the case of every inferior animal, such a termination of existence is obviously the most desirable. The pains of sickness and decrepitude of age are the usual precursors of death, resulting from gradual decay; these in the human race alone, are susceptible of alleviation from internal sources of hope and consolation; and give exercise to some of the highest charities, and most tender sympathies of humanity. But throughout the whole creation of inferior animals, no such sympathies exist; there is no affection or regard for the feeble and aged, no alleviating care to relieve the sick; and the extension of life through lingering stages of decay and of old age, would to each individual be a scene of protracted misery. Under such a system, the natural world would present a mass of daily suffering, bearing a large proportion to the total amount of animal enjoyment. By the existing dispensations of sudden destruction and rapid succession, the feeble and disabled are speedily relieved from suffering, and the world is at all times crowded with myriads of sentient and happy beings; and though to many individuals their allotted share of life be often short, it is usually a period of uninterrupted gratification; whilst the momentary pain of sudden and unexpected death is an evil infinitely small, in comparison with the enjoyments of which it is the termination. * * * * *

"Besides the desirable relief of speedy death on the approach of debility or age, the carnivora confer a further benefit on the species which form their prey, as they control their excessive increase, by the destruction of many individuals in youth and health. Without this salutary check, each species would soon multiply to an extent, exceeding in a fatal degree their supply of

food, and the whole class of herbivora would ever be so nearly on the verge of starvation, that multitudes would daily be consigned to lingering and painful death by famine; * * * but now, while each suffering individual is soon relieved from pain, it contributes its enfeebled carcase to the support of its carnivorous benefactor, and leaves more room for the comfortable existence of the healthy survivors of its own species."—Vol. i. pp. 129—131.

The genius and industry of Cuvier, aided by the laws of comparative anatomy, have, as it were, again restored to life, extinct, gigantic, and microscopic tribes, whose various organs they have analytically investigated, and the evidence of contrivance and design have most clearly shown. We can only afford space to allude to an extinct reptile of the genus *Ichthyosaurus*, (or fish lizard.) Its remains abound in the lias formation throughout England. This creature exhibits combinations of form and mechanical contrivances, which are now dispersed through various classes and orders of existing animals, but are no longer united in the same genus. Thus, in the same individual, the snout of a porpoise is combined with the teeth of a crocodile, the head of a lizard with the vertebrae of a fish, and the sternum of an *ornithorhynchus* with the paddles of a whale. Some of these reptiles exceeded thirty feet in length. In these various capabilities our author traces a beautiful adaptation to the element in which these reptiles lived, and the purposes for which they were created. This train of observation applied to remains from the fossil mammalia to fossil insects, polypes and vegetables, constitutes the great argument of the treatise, which thus concludes.

"The whole course of the enquiry, which we have now conducted to its close, has shown that the physical history of our globe, in which some have seen only waste, disorder, and confusion, teems with endless examples of economy, and order, and design; and the result of all our researches, carried back through the unwritten records of past time, has been to fix more steadily our assurance of the existence of one supreme Creator of all things, to exalt more highly our conviction of the immensity of his perfections, of his might and majesty, his wisdom and goodness, and all sustaining providence; and to penetrate our understanding with a profound and sensible perception of the 'high veneration man's intellect owes to God.'"—Vol. i. pp. 595, 596.

As we have spoken of this work in terms of praise, it is due from us, as impartial critics, to say that we apprehend the author has, at times, exceeded the bounds of inductive philosophy, and wandered into the regions of speculation and fancy. This, however, is but seldom, and consequently the whole argument is but slightly weakened by these occasional aberrations. The work is beautifully printed, but disproportionably disposed of in the volumes. The second volume contains only the plates (which are numerous, and exquisitely beautiful,) and the descriptive letter-press. Had the plates been incorporated with the text, and the contents of the volumes more equally divided, the convenience of readers would have been consulted by avoiding the frequent reference to the second volume, which is now indispensable to the comprehension of the first. We conclude by commending to our readers the perusal of this work, which is the most valuable contribution to natural theology we have met with for many years.

FOREIGN THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE.

IN consideration of the important returns to sound views of scripture which are being effected in the ever-memorable cradle of the Reformation, and the advantages which cannot but accrue to biblical literature from a judicious application of the principles of a matured and enlightened criticism, we feel assured that many of our readers will approve of our occasionally, if not regularly, supplying them with brief notices of the principal works which appear there in this department. We also purpose to furnish them with an account of recent American works of note; and, indeed, of such foreign theological publications generally as may arrest our attention.

1. *Handbuch der historisch-kritischen Einleitung in das Alte Testament*:—Manual of an historico-critical Introduction to the Old Testament. By H. A. Ch. Hävernicks, Licentiate in Divinity, and Private Lecturer in the University of Rostock. Erlangen. 1836.

This is the first part of a very important undertaking. Most of the biblical introductions which have appeared in Germany during the last half century, have been written by men of thorough-paced neological sentiments, or whose minds have been, more or less, under the influence of a vain and varying philosophy. The result of the labours of Semler, Eichhorn, De Wette, Bertholdt, and others, has been to unsettle the foundations of truth, rather than to establish it upon a stable basis. With much that is available in the way of documentary evidence, they are so completely stuffed with hypotheses, and exhibit so many daring instances of irreverence for the sacred word, that they cannot be read without pain by any person of a truly pious mind. The present writer is one of a very different school—a pupil and friend of Tholuck, and already favourably known as the author of an elaborate and thoroughly critical commentary on the book of Daniel. The part of his introduction now before us consists of three chapters. The first is occupied with a history of the canon, in which are treated its origin, progress, and completion; the persons by whom it was formed; the grounds on which any book was received into it; its divisions; extent; the apocryphal books, &c. Mr. H. avows his decided conviction, that the Hebrew Bible contained precisely the same books in the time of our Lord and his apostles which it now does. The second chapter contains a profound historical inquiry into the languages of the O. T. and the cognate dialects, especially the Hebrew, into the minutiae of which the author goes at considerable length. The remaining chapter treats of the text itself, the origin of writing, the primeval characters, and the vowel points, all of which topics are discussed with distinguished ability. The following short extract from the preface will show the spirit of the writer. “I have undertaken this work in the station which the grace of God has assigned me, in the cordial and firm conviction that the subject of investigation is the holy word of God, given to mankind sunk in sin and misery, in order to conduct them to the path of salvation and

peace. He who, by the mercy and guidance of the Lord, has been brought to understand the word of life, and, in consequence, is not only increasingly enlightened, but sanctified and blest, cannot but feel compelled to bear testimony to the grace of which he has been made a partaker according as the Lord gives him opportunity and ability. In him the saying is verified: I believe, and therefore I speak. The theologian, and servant of the church of Jesus Christ, is persuaded it is impossible to form any true theological system that is not founded on the truths of God's revealed word, and his anxious solicitude, and most zealous endeavour will be to erect on this foundation the living edifice of a science of which He is the corner stone, than whom no other foundation can be laid. He knows also that he is not engaged in the service of men, or on a vain and profitless work, but in the service of the Head of the church, who has appointed him to be a steward of the divine mysteries, that he may be found faithful at the day of the appearance of Jesus Christ."

2. *Commentar über den Brief Pauli an die Römer.* By L. J. Rückert. Leipsic, 1831.—*Der Brief des Apostels Paulus an die Römer.* By Dr. Herman Ohlshausen. Königsberg, 1835.—*Commentar zu dem Briefe des Apost. Paulus an die Römer.* By Dr. Edward Kölner. Darmstadt, 1834.—*Versuch, &c.* An attempt towards an elaborate Exposition of the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, with historical Prolegomena, and exegetical and doctrinal Excursus. By Dr. J. G. Reiche, Professor of Divinity at Gottingen. Part I. 1833.

There is not a more striking or pleasing feature in the present history of theology than the attention which is given to the Epistle to the Romans. It is confessedly that portion of the sacred volume which may be said to contain the sum and substance of revealed truth. It is, as Luther expresses himself in his preface, "the purest gospel, which well deserves, not only that every christian man should commit it word for word to memory, but that he should be daily conversant with it as the daily bread of souls. For it can never be too much or too well read and considered; and the more it is handled, the more precious will it become, and the sweeter it will taste." The effective use made of this epistle by the great Reformer, in establishing the doctrine of justification by faith, is well known; and there is every reason to believe that the result of a renewed discussion of its contents will be the disclosure of that and other kindred doctrines in all their glory to the view of multitudes who have been groping in the dark recesses of rationalism.

We have placed together four of the more important commentaries on the epistle, which have recently made their appearance in Germany, the existence of which, as well as of others, may be traced to the stimulus given by the work of Tholuck. In a comparative point of view, that of Rückert is the most popularly elaborate; that of Ohlshausen the most satisfactory as to doctrinal exhibition; and that of Reiche the richest in critical materials. The work of Kölner is eclectic in its character, but inferior to the others. Ohlshausen's is a continuation of his invaluable Commentary on the

whole N. T. He is a worthy co-worker with Tholuck, but exhibits more of a leaning to the principles of Augustine. He writes like one who feels that he has a sure foundation on which he stands, and who, in the exercise of faith, personally enjoys the truths which it is his business to elucidate; the other writers occupy themselves with an investigation of the document, just as they would any other document of antiquity, apparently altogether devoid of religious interest. Indeed, they lay it down as a first principle of interpretation, that all personal interest in the doctrines is to be kept out of view.

It is truly gratifying to observe in how many instances these writers concur in defending the truth against the attacks of neologism. No one can peruse these volumes without perceiving that, as a question of pure criticism, the tables are completely turned upon the Paulusses, the Heinrichs, and other oracles of an unbelieving age. The very canons which, as philologists, antiquarians, and historians, they laboured so hard to establish, are now employed in supporting the positions which they endeavoured to overthrow.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

The Scope of Piety; or, the Christian doing all Things to the Glory of God.
By Thomas Quinton Stow. London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Co. 1836.
pp. 315.

MR. STOW is known advantageously to the public as the author of "Memoirs of Dr. Rowland Taylor;" a work which, within narrow limits, contains much information with regard to a most interesting period of English history.

The subject of his present work is confessedly of great importance: "The eminent phraseology of Christians," he observes, "and the uniform language of the Bible," (a somewhat questionable association) "agree in declaring, that to do all things to the glory of God is the scope of piety." Mr. Stow has employed a portion of thought on the subject, which honourably evinces his own sense of its importance, and which cannot but secure the benefit of the serious and careful reader.

Our author apprehends that "objection will, perhaps, be felt to the formality of scriptural quotation adopted in his pages." This formality is, in our opinion, an excellence. It bodes ill to the interests of scriptural piety, that through a foolish affectation of refinement, direct citations from the scriptures should ever be banished, whether from the pulpit or the printed theological document.

The work before us commences with a very admirable chapter on "the importance of clear and well-defined views of the great principles of Christian character."

"By principles not so much what is primary and elementary, is intended, as what is mainly characteristic and distinctive; the predominant dispositions; the grand aims; the leading motives, and the prevailing habits of mind and conduct, by which real Christians are distinguished, both in scriptural requirement, and in fact and exemplification. As specimens of the things intended might be mentioned, spirituality, including the care of the soul and taste for spi-

ritual objects, humility, faith, love to God, sincerity, christian benevolence to men, and, *DOING ALL THINGS TO THE GLORY OF GOD.*"—p. 14.

It appeared to us, while reading this most valuable chapter, that had its phraseology been more remote from terms of abstraction, it would have been better adapted for the generality of Christians, even for the generality of those Christians, who, in comparison of the multitude, may be esteemed as intelligent. Such a passage as that which we have quoted, would deter some Christians from a perusal of the work; for notwithstanding all the vauntings of the light of our times, some Christians are only intelligent in comparison with their fellows. Had our author, for instance, substituted for the expression "principles of christian character," the term "features of christian character," which he afterwards adopts, or "the leading things in practical religion," a phrase, possibly, of somewhat too homely a cast, but which he still more subsequently adopts, he would have been better understood by the generality of his readers.

Our author's demonstration of the importance of clear and well defined views of the great principles of christian character is forcible and impressive.

"Confused, feeble, superficial representations of spiritual character leave the sinner uncertain and vacillating between these half-formed views and his own faint semblances of goodness, unconvinced of his own want, and consequently untroubled and slumbering. But let views more lucid, more bold, more uncompromising, more self-evidential and self-commending be put forth, and they form a strong light, piercing the darkness which shrouds the unhappy sleeper, and striking through the closed eyelids of the mind, suffer him to repose no longer."—p. 18.

In the second chapter Mr. Stow shows what it is to do any thing to the glory of God. "To do any thing to the glory of God," he says, "is to do any thing with a proper regard to God," a definition which he expands into a variety of particulars. Our author's object in this chapter is to specify the precise character of an action which glorifies God. It occurred to us, whether in this, or in some other part of his work, he might not have dwelt advantageously on the actions, which the scriptures represent as glorifying God; such as an acknowledgment of the divine existence and perfections. (Rom. i. 21.) Abasing ourselves before God, under a conviction of our sinfulness. (Jer. xiii. 16; Mal. ii. 2.) The acknowledgment of Jesus Christ, and by consequence the truths of his religion amidst prevailing infidelity. (Luke xxiii. 47.) And, thanksgiving to God. (Luke xvii. 18.)

In the four following chapters, the author inquires into "the extent of the requirement to do all things to the glory of God." From this part of the work we make the following extract:

"How comes it to pass that so few young men of wealth, and who seem at the same time in all other respects eligible, feel inclined to devote themselves to the work of the christian ministry? When called to choose between this momentous and useful office, and the honour, riches, or ease promised by other walks of life, how happens it, that the selection so rarely falls upon the arduous, humble, but still glorious ministry of reconciliation?"—p. 99.

We coincide in our author's remarks on the duty of relinquishing the ministerial office, not on the part of them whose labours may seem to be unsuccessful, but on their part, who are evidently unqualified for the sacred office. But an insuperable obstacle to such a relinquishment frequently exists: the insufficiency of his income has compelled the minister to dissipate the property, which is requisite in any thing like a rational attempt to engage in secular concerns.

In the following chapters the author treats of motives, prerequisites, and means, as connected with the topic of his discussion: of the certain and final success of the attempt to do all things to the glory of God, he presents us with examples of so doing, and views the Christian in heaven doing all things to the glory of God.

In the expression of his sentiments our author errs, perhaps, rather on the side of diffusiveness, than contraction. "Steering clear of these dangers we have

hinted at," is probably an error of the press. In a second edition he will possibly obliterate such questionable words as *evidential* and *bewilderment*. But these are minor blemishes, which do not subtract from the great and substantial excellencies of the work. It displays considerable skill in the anatomy of religious feeling and character, and hence is eminently a book for the closet. He who reads it merely as one of the newest publications, will probably be disappointed, but he who reads it with close attention and serious thought, cannot fail to receive the most important benefit. We recommend "The Scope of Piety" the more earnestly, as there is reason to fear that an indistinct perception on the subject of which it treats, is fatally prevalent; for although, as the author felicitously expresses it, "the heart may get before the understanding in this path of godliness," the cloudiness of the understanding must have a most pernicious influence on both the temper and the life.

Since the foregoing remarks were written, we have been informed that the author contemplates a removal to a distant hemisphere. In that case, we shall rejoice, that the truths contained in this volume are preached to the ends of the earth; and we shall hope, that the benefit which many in his native land will derive from this labour of Mr. Stow's pen, will urge them to pray for his personal happiness, and the success of his colonial ministry.

The Duty and Advantage of keeping holy the Lord's Day; the substance of Two Sermons preached at Barwick-in-Elmet, in March and April, 1836. By the Rev. W. H. Bathurst, M. A. Rector. Leeds.

VERY plain, practical, and faithful sermons; but deficient in discrimination. The author appears very zealous for the good of his parishioners; but rectors and parish priests appear, in their zeal, to forget that while duty is incumbent on all, only those who have sought and obtained the aids of divine grace, will observe, in the right spirit, the christian sabbath. There is a leaning among the evangelical clergy, in some quarters, to the antinomian heresy; and a tendency in others towards the extreme of requirement. We rejoice that there are great numbers who keep the middle course, and so preach as to "save themselves, and them that hear them." Mr. Bathurst's sermons would have pleased us better, had they evinced the scriptural wisdom with which he is endowed who keeps between these *Charybdis* and *Scylla* of divines. In his address to his parishioners, he says, "My reason for printing and distributing among you these sermons, is chiefly this: I know that your everlasting welfare depends on your being truly religious; and I know that true religion cannot prosper in any place where the sabbath day is not strictly kept holy. I am grieved to think how little that sacred day is observed among you as it ought to be: I dread the fatal consequences of this sinful neglect, and the heavy wrath of God which must come upon you, if you refuse to hallow his sabbaths. I therefore feel it to be my duty to address you on this important subject as plainly and faithfully as I can; to show you how God commands, and expects you to honour his holy day, and to warn you most earnestly not to slight this command, lest you bring upon yourselves certain and terrible destruction."

Decorum is good. A decorous parish is better than a disorderly one. But there is danger that the change from the latter to the former should be mistaken for true religion, while the heart remains unchanged, the carnal mind still in a state of enmity towards God, and the religion of the parish just of that character, which many a *Dr. Orderly*, of these days, is mistaking for all that can be, and all that is designed to be effected by the gospel of Jesus Christ. The truth is, men are not made religious in parishes any more than they are in nations. A parish religion, and a national religion, are the same in character. The surface has assumed a new appearance; but the sub-soil is foul and defiling still. After all that baptismal regeneration has done, all that the rite of confirmation has accomplished, and all that has been effected by the regular recital of the

liturgy, added to great moral excellence in the character of the parochial clergyman, and a well-meant zeal for the spiritual benefit of his parishioners, in how many instances has almost every mind within the compass of the parish remained dark as to the character of God, of Christ, and of the great salvation, and the prevailing conduct evinced that almost every heart is hard as the nether mill-stone to divine impression. Formality and pharisaism abound, but humility, purity, and devotion have rarely visited its border. Yet there are the parish church, and the officiating minister, and, (with the exception, perhaps, of a few dissenters,) the population of the whole parish, the strenuous adherents of the establishment. This is the parochial system, in which some good men see so much to admire, and from the least change in which they anticipate the greatest evils—religious confusion, and civil anarchy. But to many men of piety and reflection, its tendency appears to be to confound the church of Christ with the world, to infuse a bitter and overbearing spirit of sectarianism, and to cherish, in the bosom of thousands, a fallacious idea of spiritual security. With these, “to keep to their church,” is to be secure (whatever be their sentiments, emotions, or conduct) of an introduction to heaven.

The Christian entitled to Legal Protection in the Observance of the Lord's Day. A Sermon preached in the Church of St. Mary, Hornsey, on Sunday, May 8, 1836. By the Rev. Richard Hareey, M.A. Rector.

A VERY excellent sermon on an important subject. The view it takes is the correct one. Would that Sir Andrew Agnew, and the advocates of his impracticable bill, would peruse it with attention. It is evidently the production of a liberal and superior mind. We most cordially concur with the writer in all his hints and illustrations. He hopes that his sermon will lead the readers of it to the perusal of other and more important writers on the subject. We hope, that one so well qualified by the simplicity and energy of his style, and by the correctness of his views, will engage in the composition of such a work himself. It would merit, and coming from such a quarter it might secure, the attention of great numbers connected with the established church.

The Revival and Rejection of an old Traditional Heresy, as handed down by Calvin, Luther, Edwards, Twiss, Toplady, Tucker, on the Doctrine of God decreeing all Sin, examined and refuted; showing that the Doctrine is unscriptural, and unquestionably makes God the Author of Sin. By John Benson. 12mo. London: Ward and Co.

WE think John Benson would have done well, had he made the title of his book more simple and short, and the book itself much smaller and cheaper than it is. It must be admitted, that some modern divines, and several of the reformers of the sixteenth century, made rash and unwarranted assertions concerning the decrees of God. We quite agree with John Benson, in embracing the doctrine of election as taught in scripture, but abhor the thought of making God the author of sin.

The Mammon of Unrighteousness. A Discourse suggested by the Funeral of N. M. Rothschild, Esq. By the Rev. John Styles, D.D.

“GOLD,” it has been said, “is the only power which receives universal homage. It is worshipped in all lands without a single temple, and in all classes without a single hypocrite; and often has it been able to boast of having armies for its priesthood, and hecatombs of human victims for its sacrifices.” From Luke xvi. 9. Dr. S. has produced one of the most able discourses we have ever seen, on a subject of great importance. We shall only just repeat a few sentences from the conclusion.

"Responsibility is a word of dreadful import, under any circumstances; with what a power of holy and awful impression ought it to fall upon our spirits at this moment! Give an account of thy stewardship. This was sternly said by death, to him who recently left his millions to obey the summons. It will ere long be addressed to every individual among us. Let me also remind you, that the solemn admonitions of our Lord in this parable, are directed to his disciples, his followers, the children of light; and do they who have entered upon a religious course, they who are affected by the terrors of the world to come, they who have awakened and tender consciences, who know their Lord's will and are deeply anxious to fulfil it, stand in such peril, and are they in such danger from a world which they have renounced? 'If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?' What must be the doom of those who know no god but mammon—who care for no other world than the present? There can be no madness of infatuation to be compared with that of an immortal forgetting his high destiny, and seeking his happiness in the shadows of time."

The Value of the Church of England, as a Keeper of Truth. A Sermon preached in the Cathedral of Norwich, August 17th, 1836, by the Rev. Edwin Sidney, A.M.

WHAT Mr. S. applies from his text, Isa. xxvi. 1, 2, to the church of England, belongs more properly to the church of Christ, as scattered throughout various communities. We grant, that in the formularies of the English church, there are rich portions of gospel truth; but there is a certain depository, a volume bearing the stamp of heaven, which contains the *whole treasure* of divine truth without alloy; and every church, (congregation of faithful men,) yes, and every family and individual, influenced by genuine, vital, and practical religion, is a keeper of truth. Without such living guardians, we think Mr. S. will agree with us, that the decrees and symbols of general councils and convocations, or acts of parliament ratified by royal authority, are altogether but a dead letter.

A Letter to the Editor of the Quarterly Review, in Reply to certain Strictures in that Publication on the Rev. Dr. Keith's Evidence of Prophecy, from the Rev. James Brewster.

THE writer has vindicated his friend's fair fame with great ability, and, as we think, completely repelled the charges and insinuations of the reviewer.

The Danger of Apostasy from Christ; exhibited in an Essay, by G. Barrow Kidd. 18mo. London: Westley and Davis.

THIS is an expository view of Hebrews vi. 1—6. On this difficult portion of scripture Mr. K. abstains from all controversy; his spirit throughout being deeply serious, and his aim entirely practical.

We do not agree with him, that the persons described in the 4th and 5th verses were real Christians, men converted to God and united to Christ. They had attained a knowledge of the doctrines of Christianity, were affected by its promises, and the fair prospects of futurity which they open, and perhaps possessed some of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit common to that age; but they are not spoken of as regenerated, as new creatures in Christ Jesus, or as being the subjects of faith and love, abounding in self-denying obedience. These are the things which *accompany salvation*. Apostates, like the hearers compared to stony ground, produced a rapid vegetation, but having no root soon withered away. It is part of the character of *real* Christians, that they are not of those who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. This is the view of the passage given by Owen, Poole, Guise, Doddridge, and the general stream of our best commentators.

THE EDITOR'S TABLE.

The Editor will continue to insert under this head the title of new books and pamphlets that are forwarded to him. In this way he hopes to gratify both his readers and the publishers by the earliest announcement in his power of the works that are confided to him, which, however, will not supersede a critical notice of most of them at a future period. Copies of recent publications, and notices of works in the press that are likely to interest the readers of this miscellany, will in this way receive prompt attention.

Discourses by the late Rev. John B. Patterson, A. M. Minister of Falkirk : to which is prefixed a Memoir of his Life, and select literary and religious Remains. With a Portrait of the Author. In two volumes, crown 8vo. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd. 18s.

Letters on the present state of the Visible Church of Christ, addressed to John Angel James, Minister of the Gospel in Birmingham : by R. M. Beverley. 12mo. London: Dinnis. 4s.

The Choir and the Oratory; or Praise and Prayer. By Josiah Conder. 12mo. London: Jackson and Walford. 6s.

The present State and Claims of London. By Robert Ainslie. 8vo. 1s. 6d. London: Seeley.

Mrs. Henderson's Scripture Lessons, Part IV. 18mo. London, sold for the Author, by Hamilton, Adams, and Co. 6d.

Theory of the Hebrew Verb. By the Rev. W. Yates, of Calcutta. Second Edition, pp. 58. London: Wightman. 3s.

Reflections on a Flower Garden. By the Rev. James Hervey, late Rector of Weston Favell. Illustrated by Drawings of the Flowers. Neatly bound, 5s. 6d. London: C. Tilt.

The Honour attached to eminent Piety and Usefulness. A Sermon preached at Downing-street Meeting House, Cambridge, Sunday, Nov. 20th, 1836, on occasion of the Death of the Rev. Charles Simeon, M.A. Senior Fellow of King's College. By Samuel Thodey. 8vo. London: Hamilton and Co. 1s.

Sermons preached at the British Episcopal Church, Rotterdam, by the Rev. C. R. Muston, M.A. Assistant Chaplain, and Author of "Recognition in the World to come." 8vo. Hatchard and Son. 12s.

The Preacher from the Press. Sermons to explain and to recommend the Gospel of Jesus Christ. By John Alexander, Norwich. 12mo. Vol. 1. Jackson and Walford. 3s. 6d.

The Revivalist: exclusively devoted to the revival and extension of Evangelical Religion. Conducted by the Rev. Joseph Belcher. 18mo. Ward and Co.

Questions respecting the Social Worship of Inmates of Workhouses, considered by a Layman. 8vo. Hamilton and Co. 6d.

A Practical Guide to the Prophecies, with reference to their Interpretation and Fulfilment, and to Personal Edification. By Rev. Edward Bickersteth, Rector of Watton. 12mo. 5th Edition, enlarged. London: Seeley and Co.

Pastoral Recollections. Edited by the Rev. J. Belcher. 18mo. London: Ward and Co.

Missionary Records. West Africa, with two Maps. London: Tract Society. Temper Sweetened, essential to Personal and Domestic Happiness. By J. Thornton. London: Wightman. 18mo.

Britain's Plea for Sailors. London: 18mo. Nisbet and Co.

The Christian Catechist, Part IV. On Public Worship. By John Bulmer. 32mo. London: Jackson and Walford. 3d.

The Adventures of a Cotton Tree. By Henry Harcourt. With many Engravings. London: Westley and Davis. 18mo. 2s.

The Herald of Peace. Monthly. 8vo. Ward and Co.

Daily Thoughts on important Subjects. Ward and Co.

The Adventures of a Coal Mine. By Henry Harcourt. London: Westley and Davis. 18mo. 2s.

The Family Magazine, Vol. III. 1836. Conducted by the Rev. Joseph Belcher. 8vo. London: Thomas Ward and Co. 4s. 6d.

The Life of Ali Pasha, of Tepeleni, Vizier of Epirus; surnamed Aslan, or the Lion. By R. A. Davenport. London: Tegg and Son. 12mo. 5s.

An Efficient Ministry: a Charge delivered at the Ordination of the Rev. Joseph Elliott over the Church assembling at North Gate-street Chapel, Bury St. Edmund's. By the Rev. Andrew Reed, D.D. London: Thomas Ward and Co. 18mo. boards. 1s.

Elements of Prophetic Interpretation. By the Rev. J. W. Brooks, Vicar of Clarebro', Retford. London: R. B. Seeley and Co. 12mo.

Interesting Narratives from the Sacred Volume. Illustrated and improved by the Rev. Joseph Belcher. Second Edition, revised, with Additions. London: F. Baisler. Ward and Co. Crown 8vo.

Chapters on Flowers. By Charlotte Elizabeth. London: R. B. Seeley. 12mo.

An Act for Marriages in England, and an Act for Registering Births, Deaths, and Marriages, with a practical Arrangement of their Provisions, Notes, Forms, the Registrar General's Circulars, and a Copious Index. Adapted to the use of all persons. By Richard Matthews, of the Middle Temple, Esq. Barrister at Law. London: Saunders and Benning, Law Booksellers. 12mo.

A Guffe to the Churchman in his Devotional Use of the Litany, in the Book of Common Prayer. Being a course of Lectures preached during Lent, at Acton, Suffolk. By John Bickersteth, M.A., Vicar. London: Seeley and Co. 12mo.

One Hundred Sketches and Skeletons of Sermons. By a Dissenting Minister, Vol. II. London: George Wightman. 12mo.

Live Joyfully; or, the Duty and Means of being Happy. By the Rev. Joseph Belcher. London: F. Baisler. 18mo.

Tales about the Sun, Moon, and Stars. By Peter Parley, with numerous Engravings. London: T. Tegg, and Son. 4s. 6d.

A Letter to the Editor of the Quarterly Review, in Reply to an Article in the last Number of that Journal, on the subject of Church Rates. By a Lay Dissenter. London: Westley and Davis. 8vo. 6d.

The Life of Christ, in the Words of the Evangelists. A complete Harmony of the Gospel History of Our Saviour, for the Use of Young Persons. London: C. Tilt. 18mo.

The Devotional Psalmist, or Christian's Morning Companion, Select Psalms, with Practical Observations and Meditations; a series of daily reading during a course of three months, selected from the most eminent authors. London: C. Tilt. 32mo.

The Temperance Penny Magazine, Vol. I. London: T. Ward and Co. Large 8vo.

The Protestant Dissenter's Juvenile Magazine, Vol. IV. London: Simpkin and Co. 32mo.

The Adventure of a Sugar Plantation. By Henry Harcourt, with many Engravings. London: Westley and Davis. 18mo. 2s.

The Scripture Doctrine of Atonement, proposed to careful examination. By Stephen West, D.D. of Stockbridge, America. London: Tract Society. 18mo.

Three Lectures on the Polity and History of the Hebrews, from the Exode to the Advent of the Messiah; delivered to the Members of the Sunday School Union Library and Reading Room, Paternoster Row, on Wednesday Evenings, February 10th, March 9th, and April 6th, 1836. By John Hoppus, M.A. Professor of the Philosophy of the Human Mind and Logic, in the University of London. Sunday School Union, 60, Paternoster Row, 1 vol. small 8vo.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES AT HOME AND ABROAD.

GENERAL CONVENTION OF CONGREGATIONAL AND PRESBYTERIAN MINISTERS IN THE STATE OF VERMONT, N. A.

This Convention comprises 12 Associations, and 198 churches. The number of church members is 21,585, being a net increase, during the past year, of 1316 persons. This important body held its annual meeting at Castletown, Tuesday, Sept. 13, 1836. The meeting was opened with an able sermon by the Rev. Mr. Buckham, from 2 Cor. iv. 5. The Rev. Charles Walton, of Brattleborough, was chosen moderator; and Messrs. Seldon and Hodges appointed scribes. There was a larger number of delegates present than had been known for many years, and an unusual proportion of the most able ministers in the state of Vermont.

We are particular in making these statements to our readers, that they may appreciate the importance of the proceedings of the Convention on the anxious question of *American Slavery*. A letter from *The Congregational Union of Scotland* was read, accompanied by the Resolutions which were proposed by Dr. Wardlaw at the last annual meeting of that body in Edinburgh.* These documents were referred to a Committee of the Convention, consisting of the Rev. Professor Wheeler, D.D., Rev. J. F. Goodhere, and the Hon. William Slade, who subsequently presented the following *Report on Slavery* :—

“ The Committee, to whom was referred the communication from the Congregational Union of Scotland on the subject of slavery, beg leave to report as follows :—

“ That while we would reciprocate the kind and Christian feelings expressed in their letter to the Congregational Churches of Vermont, we would say, that slavery, as a subject of legislation, is not within the jurisdiction of the state government under which we live, nor of the national government, with the exception of the district of Columbia and the territories of the United States. In relation to the district of Columbia, the citizens of our state have long been desirous, and have often expressed that desire in petitions, that the national government would abolish slavery and the slave trade within its bounds.

“ The evil and the wickedness pertaining to the system of slavery in any of our states seem to us enormous, and as such, calls for the most solemn consideration of the wisest statesmen and the most devoted philanthropists. We cannot regard it in any other light than as the most portentous evil that threatens our country, and as such we earnestly recommend to all a consideration of the subject in the light of our Saviour, that in all things we should do unto others as we would that they should do unto us; and also in the light of the historical certainty, that the institution, as it now exists, will (under the government of God), work out for all who tolerate it in principle, not only individual injustice, impurity, and crime, but national wretchedness, and final ruin.

“ In accordance with the wishes expressed in the communication from Scotland, we would make known the feeling of our transatlantic brethren to our churches, by requesting a publication of their communication in the columns of the *Vermont Chronicle*.

“ Resolved, that a copy of the foregoing be communicated by the register to the Congregational Union of Scotland. All which is respectfully submitted.

J. WHEELER, for the Committee.”

The adoption of this Report was moved by the Rev. Thos. A. Merrill, and seconded by the Rev. W. C. Burnap, which was supported by an able speech of the Hon. William Slade, which we regret we have not room to insert. After a few verbal corrections, the Report was adopted *unanimously*, affording *one proof*, amongst many that it is in our power to produce, that our Christian brethren in America are not so apathetical on the question of slavery as some persons have represented.

* Inserted in the *Congregational Magazine* for June, 1836, p. 389.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE EVANGELICAL CHURCHES ON THE CONTINENT.

As it is one object of *The Congregational Union of England and Wales* "to establish fraternal correspondence with Congregational churches and other bodies of Christians throughout the world," the Committee were for a long time anxious to obtain some appropriate method of communication with their beloved brethren in France, Switzerland, Germany, and Holland. Having ascertained that their valued brother, the Rev. Joseph Turnbull, B. A. of Brighton, intended to visit those countries during the past summer, they gladly availed themselves of his gratuitous services to circulate amongst foreign Protestant ministers the "Declaration of Faith and Church Order," and the other publications of "the Union," and to convey to them the assurances of our affectionate sympathy and constant prayers.

How effectively Mr. Turnbull has fulfilled that commission, will be seen from the letters which he has addressed to the Secretaries; the first of which we are now happy to lay before our readers.

"Brighton, 17th August, 1836.

"To the Secretaries of the Congregational Union of England and Wales.

"DEAR BRETHREN,

"Having, by the protecting providence of God, accomplished the continental tour which I contemplated, I proceed to inform the Committee of the Union the result of my inquiries and arrangements on their behalf.

"The objects which I endeavoured to keep constantly in view, were two:—first, to ascertain the existence and state of true Christians in France, Switzerland, Germany, and Holland: secondly, to make some preliminary arrangements for the establishment of a fraternal relation with them, in connexion with the Union.

"It afforded me much pleasure to learn, that I had lately been preceded in my course by brethren from England, Scotland, and America,* having similar objects in view.

"On my arrival in Paris, I was much disappointed to find that my old friend and school-fellow, the Rev. Mark Wilks, was in England. His return being daily expected, I remained in Paris several days beyond the period which I had allotted for that place; but as he did not arrive, I was reluctantly compelled to proceed. It was my privilege, however, to have several communications with Mr. Mackenzie, who represented Mr. Wilks, and with whom I deposited some copies of the Declaration and the Addresses of the Union, for circulation in Paris and other parts of France. Mr. Mackenzie, like Mr. Wilks, has taken up his residence in Paris, that he may employ his time and talents in promoting works of charity and piety among the French people. Mr. Mackenzie is, at present, engaged in composing a Concordance to the French Bible, a work which is a great desideratum in that country. He entered very cordially into the objects and plan of the Union, and promised to co-operate with Mr. Wilks and others in any arrangements which might be considered useful for carrying into effect the purposes of the Union with respect to France.

"As the annual meetings of the Paris Bible Society, Missionary and Tract Societies, and of the Société Evangélique de France, take place in the month of April, that would be the proper time of the year for the commencement of any systematic correspondence. If the Committee should appoint some member of the Union to meet our brethren of France assembled on those anniversaries at Paris, some arrangement for the future would probably be established. The Evangelical among French Protestants are almost all represented on that occasion, and especially in the meeting of the Société Evangélique de France; and,

* Viz. the Rev. Dr. Sprague, of Albany, Rev. David King, of Glasgow, and Captain Hall, of Plymouth.

although that is not strictly an ecclesiastical society, yet nearly all its members are in church-communion, and, as far as I can judge, it seems the only existing medium in France for holding that general fellowship with the churches and pastors there which the Union desires: beside, it is the Home Missionary Society of France, and is more naturally allied in its character to our institution.

"All the Evangelical meetings of Paris are now held in the Chapel of the Rue Taitbout, which may be considered as the concentration of all the Protestant Evangelical Institutions of France. The chapel is situated near the most frequented part of the Boulevards, and was formerly a theatre. It will contain upwards of five hundred persons, and the morning service, held in the French language, is attended by about half that number. The afternoon service is in English, when, of course, the congregation is much less numerous. Messrs. Audebez and Grand-Pierre have the pastoral care of the morning congregation, and Mr. Wilks has the charge of that in the afternoon. Communications on the business of the Union may be addressed *officially* to M. Audebez, Pasteur.

"From all that I have heard of M. Frederic Monod, one of the pastors of the Reformed Church of the Oratoire, in Paris, I should think that he would prove to be a cordial friend to our Union, and an able auxiliary. I called upon him, but found he was absent from home.

"During the two Sabbaths which I spent in Paris, I endeavoured to attend as many religious services as possible, both Catholic and Protestant. Among others, I heard the Rev. Mr. Newstead, a Wesleyan minister, who has two rooms in the Rue d'Anjou, Faubourg St. Honoré, and who preaches morning and evening in English to a congregation of about a hundred persons.

"The chapel at the Marboeuf, erected by Mr. Lewis Way, is now occupied by the Rev. W. Lovett, an Episcopal and Evangelical minister from England, and, as I understand, is well attended. The church of the Oratoire is not filled. At the morning service which I attended, there were not more than three hundred persons. These were mostly females. Such, however, was the case in all the places of worship in Paris which I visited. I should think five or six women for one man. This is very striking in the principal Catholic churches; but in them it is easily accounted for, as every thing which art can devise is employed to operate on the senses and the passions. The whole is dramatic. The deep tragedy of the Crucifixion is performed with all the aids of appropriate scenery, the most exquisite and soul-thrilling music, and well-practised actors. The men are to be found on the Sabbath morning at the cafés, billiard-tables, and such places, and in the latter part of the day at the theatres, and public gardens, which open as soon as the churches and the shops are closed. So that the day is entirely devoted either to business or to pleasure. Infidelity is here undisguised. There can be no mistake. It is impossible to doubt that there is as much reason for a christian mission to Paris as to Calcutta.

"After a residence of ten days in Paris, I proceeded immediately to Lyons, passing by steam down the beautiful river Saône from Chalons. I arrived, after a fatiguing journey of four days, in time to spend the Sabbath with my friend the Rev. Adolphe Monod; son of the late M. Monod, president of the Consistory of the Reformed at Paris, and brother of the Rev. Fred. Monod, before-mentioned. Having held some previous correspondence with M. Monod on the subject of his church affairs, and his lady being English and a particular friend of my own, I was, at once at home. I had long felt extremely interested in the peculiar situation of M. Monod, and earnestly desired to converse with him and see exactly how he was proceeding. This desire was fully gratified during a visit of six days, on every one of which I enjoyed the pleasure of his interesting company. He is, surely, a light shining in a dark place, and I am happy to say, that many are rejoicing in his light.

"Lyons, the city of Irenæus and the martyrs, is now one of the strong holds of Romanism in its most inveterate forms, and which maintains an extensive sway over a great portion of the female population. I had the opportunity of visiting

nearly all the principal churches of this busy and populous city, during the Sabbath services, which commence so early as five in the morning, and continue without intermission until the same hour in the evening; and I happened to witness one of those splendid and imposing processions, which the priests, in opposition to the law of France, have renewed of late in this city. At first, the procession was confined to the interior of the church; then it crept out meekly and softly into the adjoining street, and finding that the authorities did not interpose, it then stepped out boldly into the public square, where I saw it passing on the Sabbath afternoon, in all 'the pomp and circumstance' of its prototype at Rome. It was in honour of St. Peter himself, and therefore the whole establishment of the church and convent was put into requisition—girls and boys in white, chanting hymns—youths in white, tossing censers—the choir in gorgeous suits like the heralds' tabards, with instruments of music—the priests in their robes, bearing tapers, banners, crucifixes of massive silver—and fast, but not least, the little pope himself, clothed in golden apparel, under a splendid canopy borne by attendant priests.

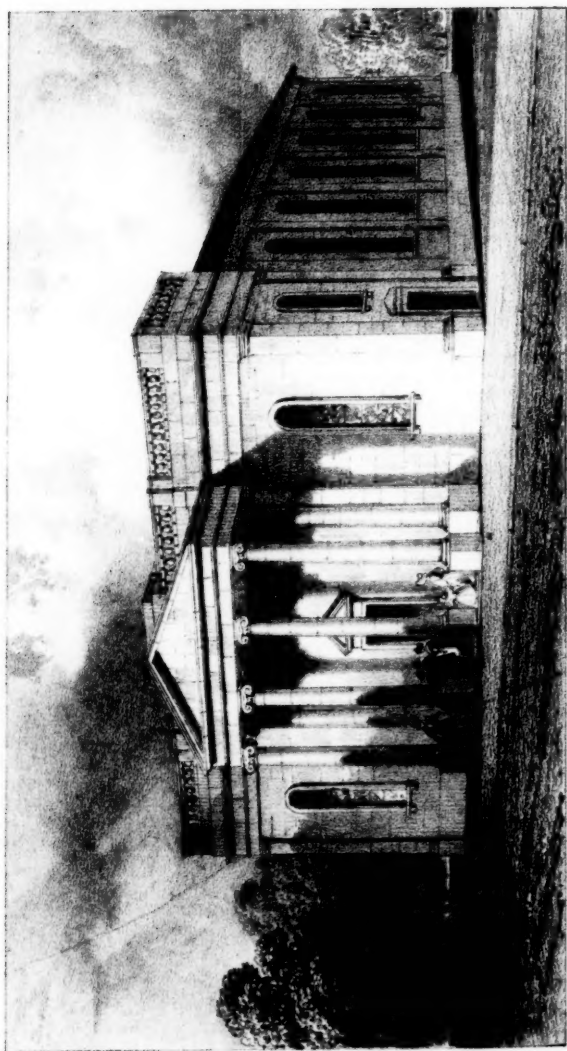
"A multitude of men, women, and children, formed in lines, seemed much interested in the spectacle, and there were certainly more men to witness it, than had attended in all the churches of the city throughout the day. As a specimen I may quote the attendance at St. Just, one of the finest churches in Lyons, which consisted of about 650 women and girls, 30 men, and 50 boys. Here you see in abundance those *objets de devotion* which are but little known in Paris, little waxen models of arms, legs, heads, and other parts of the body, placed before the shrine of our Lady, or some favourite *saintess*, to indicate the devout acknowledgment of the worshipper for some miraculous cure. The old women drive a good trade in beads, crucifixes, arms, legs, and little candles; and the priests have a tariff for indulgences and offices of religion, which makes it somewhat expensive to go to heaven by their road. They have, as it were, in triumph over the whole subjugated city, placed an inscription over the door of the church at Fourvieres, the highest and most conspicuous point of the whole city, ascribing its preservation from the cholera to the intercession of the Virgin. It runs thus:

"'A. N. D. Fourvieres.

"'Lyon reconnaissant d'avoir été par son intercession préservé du cholera en MDCCCXXXII et MDCCCXXXV.'

"In professed opposition to this stream of superstition there is *one* protestant temple, situated in the centre of the city, having three pastors for the congregation, which is inconsiderable in numbers, though possessing some of the most wealthy merchants of the place. This branch of the reformed churches of France is, however, but dry and little profitable; the pastors are opposed to evangelical religion; and, as they make no efforts against Romanism, so Romanism has no quarrel with them.

"It is against *Adolphe Monod* that both parties have a pique; and not without cause. M. Monod was for many years one of the pastors of the reformed church at Lyons, and for some time president of the consistory. His faithful evangelical ministry was the means of awakening considerable attention to the truths of the gospel, and of the conversion of many, both Catholics and Protestants, so called. On this account, a systematic opposition arose to his ministry from both quarters. The consistory, at length, took occasion from his public declaration, that he would not administer the Lord's Supper to persons of immoral life, to deprive him of his station; and, after considerable delay, the government ratified their decision. On this event, M. Monod had the offer of the theological chair at Geneva, among the *unestablished* reformed, and also a call from a protestant church at Lausanne. But the most disinterested and conscientious motives determined his stay at Lyons, to 'feed the flock' which the Great Shepherd had placed under his spiritual care. The history of his privations, trials, and sacrifices for the truth of Christ in Lyons, is in perfect accordance with that of the primitive preachers and pastors of the church. His



W. & A. G. Lamb, 10, Old Bailey

INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, LEAMINGTON.

London: Published by W. & A. G. Lamb, 10, Old Bailey.

idelity has not been unrewarded. The church of Christ now under his pastoral care, composed for the most part of converts, the fruit of his own ministry, is flourishing both in numbers and piety. It is true that they are drawn chiefly from the middling and lower ranks of society, though a few wealthy are yet numbered with them. But they are a united, affectionate, and zealous band of Christians, co-operating with each other, and with their most estimable pastor, for the advancement of the truth of the gospel amidst their superstitious or infidel neighbours. Having spent one Sabbath and five days among them, I am in some measure enabled to judge of their situation and condition; and from all I have seen and heard, I am prepared to say, that it is a station of great importance to the interests of the gospel in the south of France, and should excite a lively interest in the breasts of British Christians. I therefore most earnestly desire that it may be taken under the affectionate, devout, and sympathising regard of the Committee, and the members of the Union at large.

"M. Monod, upon my explanation of the views and objects of the Union, entered very cordially into the design, and assured me that he would do all in his power to promote it in the south of France. He appointed a special meeting of his congregation for the purpose of affording me an opportunity of stating to them the nature of my mission, which I did, to the best of my ability, in the French language; and which I was happy to find was not only perfectly understood, but was most affectionately received.

"M. Monod much desired that I should accompany him to Macon, and other places on the Saône, to meet the pastors, who were to assemble for the purpose of considering what form of discipline and order should be more permanently adopted among them. I much regretted that the limits of my time would not admit of this privilege. As a compensation, however, I prevailed on M. Monod to engage to send to the Committee, not only an account of the result of that meeting, but also a succinct statement of the present condition of religion in the south of France. I also received from him the pleasing assurance that, if it could be made to comport with his duties at home, he would probably visit our assembly at some future anniversary; and, as M. Monod speaks English very correctly, his presence and his communications would, I am persuaded, afford the highest interest to our meetings. I am desired by him to present his thanks to the Committee, and in particular to Dr. Bennett, for the interest manifested toward him by the kind and judicious letter addressed to him by the Doctor, in the name of the Committee. The Declaration and Addresses are left in the hands of M. Monod for circulation.

"From Lyons I proceeded to Geneva, Vevey, Basel, Strasbourg, and Düsseldorf, respecting each of which places and their localities I hope to send interesting communications previously to the next meeting of the Committee.

"I am, dear Brethren,

"Your sincere friend and fellow-servant in the gospel,

"JOSEPH TURNBULL."

HISTORICAL NOTICE OF THE CHURCH AND CONGREGATION ASSEMBLING IN SPENCER STREET CHAPEL, LEAMINGTON.

WITH AN ENGRAVING.

Leamington Priors, or as it is sometimes called, Leamington Spa, is situated in the heart of Warwickshire, 22 miles from Birmingham, 10 from Coventry, and 2 from Warwick. Thirty-five years ago it was a village of the smallest class; but in consequence of the more general use of its mineral springs it has become an attractive watering place, and contains a population of 12,500 souls.

The establishment of the first dissenting congregation originated in the zeal, perseverance, and self-denying exertions of the Rev. J. W. Percy, of Warwick. He commenced the preaching of the gospel in a spacious room, and in the year 1816 Mr. P., in connection with the neighbouring ministers and others, friends of the truth, erected a chapel in Clemens-street. The first minister was the Rev. A. Bromley. It was the benevolent determination of the trustees to render

this place of worship serviceable to the extension of the gospel among all parties, and they therefore resolved to act on the principle of a kind and liberal accommodation. To accommodate the dissenters, the minister selected was of the Congregational denomination, and educated at Hoxton; to accommodate the members of the establishment the liturgy of the church of England was read. Not to give umbrage to the dissenters, selections only from the prayers were at first used; but to secure the attendance of episcopalians, the church service was introduced on all occasions of public worship. That Mr. Bromley might be fully recognized by the dissenters as the minister of the place, he was ordained; but lest his ordination should leave the impression of its being exclusively a dissenting chapel it was privately conducted. To silence the cry of "open communion" from the dissenters, a society was formed, but on different principles from a Congregational church; and at the same time no inconvenience was experienced by episcopalians, who were freely admitted to the Lord's Supper, which was administered according to the prescribed form in the Book of Common Prayer. This chapel was called "Union Chapel." The design of the trustees in this arrangement cannot be mistaken. It was of a truly benevolent character. They were willing to sacrifice party prejudices, not from any selfish or corrupt motive, but only in order "to save some." How far the method adopted was judicious is questionable. Dissenters, who prefer extemporaneous prayer to a liturgy, will seek the means of grace elsewhere; hence, in this instance, the majority of dissenting visitors attended the ministry of Mr. Percy at Warwick. Episcopals, who may not be prejudiced against an "unconsecrated chapel," will cease to frequent it when an evangelical ministry is to be enjoyed in the establishment. Nominal Christians are led in consequence to regard the devotional services as of a secondary importance, whilst the irreligious scoff at the design as a worldly speculation—as an attempt (as they express themselves) "to make the place answer."

Mr. Bromley was a highly acceptable and pleasing preacher. When first settled over the congregation, he conscientiously declined reading the Liturgy. These scruples were, in the course of time, overcome, and he conducted this part of the worship in his own person; but, in 1823, he left Union Chapel to receive holy orders in the establishment. After two years cessation from all preaching, he was appointed curate in a very small village, where his sphere of usefulness was greatly contracted. He died, much lamented, a few years after. Apart from all denominational considerations, it was a source of sincere regret that Mr. B. should have been induced to exchange so important, interesting, and extended a sphere of labour in Leamington, for so limited a station as that which he subsequently occupied.

Mr. B. was succeeded by the Rev. Mr. Seaton. Like Mr. Bromley, he entered the church, after officiating as minister of Union Chapel, for the space of two years. The "silence" usually thought necessary from dissenting ministers, to qualify them to preach in a church, was dispensed with in Mr. Seaton's case; and having read the prayers and preached in Union Chapel, on one Sabbath, he was permitted to appear in the pulpit of an established church, in Cambridge, the succeeding Lord's-day. Mr. S. still continues to labour in the establishment.

Mr. Seaton was followed by the Rev. C. Bassano, a student at Blackburn Academy. After Mr. B. had preached about two years, and to many with much acceptance, a spirit of discord was observed in the congregation of Union Chapel. The very few dissenters who still attended expressed dissatisfaction at the total abandonment of congregational privileges, and the absence of christian fellowship, together with the exclusive observance of the rites and ordinances of episcopal worship. No hope of a speedy or efficient alteration being held out to them by the minister, they determined to lay their complaints before the trustees, who also were apprehensive that there existed some defect, as a debt upon the chapel was contracted by the deficiency in Mr. Bassano's salary. In vain they solicited Mr. B. to ascertain the sense of the majority of his congre-

gation, as to the proposed alteration in the form of worship; and on his refusing to do so, they resolved—1st. That the liturgical form of worship should be laid aside, and congregational discipline observed, according to the predilections of those who had founded Union Chapel; and, 2d, That the Rev. C. Bassano should be requested to accept the oversight of the congregation, thus altered in its mode of worship. Mr. B. declined, and retired to rooms in the town, and his congregation afterwards built Mill Street Chapel, which was ultimately purchased by the Rev. Rowland Hill.

The trustees, on learning the disinclination of Mr. Bassano to continue minister, wrote to the committee of Highbury College, who sent the Rev. A. Pope, the pastor of the church and congregation at the present time. The Rev. Mr. Percy, who had been an indefatigable friend of the chapel from the commencement, and who had collected £1300 towards its erection, presided at the formation of the church, July, 1828. The increase in the number of hearers has been very encouraging. When Mr. P. first preached in Clemens Street Chapel, Feb. 10, 1828, only two families had taken sittings, and twenty-seven persons attended. In the course of seven years, the congregation had so far augmented, that the chapel was inadequate to the accommodation of those who desired to occupy seats in it. The proposal of an enlargement was mentioned to T. Wilson, Esq. and others, who were of opinion, that as the property was leasehold, the inconvenience of enlarging it, having houses on both sides, and the expense attending such a plan, it would be more desirable to sell the old chapel, and to erect a new place of worship in a commanding part of the town. The foundation stone was laid Sept. 24, 1835, in Spencer Street, by the Rev. J. A. James, of Birmingham, by whose constant and valuable friendship the Independent congregation have been greatly encouraged. It was opened by the Rev Messrs. James, and Parsons of York, last July. (See *Congregational Magazine*, August 1836.) The increased attendance at Spencer Street Chapel, more than justifies the congregation in taking the important step, as some hundreds regularly worship there who could not have been accommodated in the old chapel. Many efforts have been made to meet the necessary expenses. Large sums have been contributed, and gifts, in the form of materials, have been presented. The stone pillars, and all the ornamental part of the front of the edifice, is the gift of J. Russell, Esq. the gratuitous architect. An earnest appeal for further assistance is made to the public, to visitors, as well as to the inhabitants. As this erection is not merely a local advantage, but a convenience to individuals in various parts of Great Britain, who visit Leamington for health or pleasure, the claims which it possesses on their attention, will be found, it is hoped, of so just and urgent a nature as to dispose them to contribute liberally towards this place of worship. Contributions will be thankfully received by the Rev. A. Pope, the minister, and by J. Ransford, Esq. Leamington Bank.

RESOLUTION OF THE CONGREGATIONAL BOARD.

At the Monthly Meeting of the Ministers of the Congregational Board, held at the Library, Blomfield Street, on Tuesday, Dec. 13, 1836; the Rev. W. S. Palmer, in the chair:—“It was resolved unanimously, That this Board begs to express its cordial thanks to his Majesty’s Government for the recent Act of Parliament for the Registration of Births, Marriages, and Deaths; and recommends to the Ministers and Churches of the Congregational Denomination, to facilitate the important objects of the Registration Commissioners, by entrusting to their care all documents relating to that subject, agreeably to the regulations and conditions stated in the Circular of the said Commissioners.

ARTHUR TIDMAN, Secretary.”

ORDINATION, REMOVAL, &c.

On Wednesday, the 23d of November, the Rev. J. Chater, late student at Hackney, was ordained pastor over the church of Christ, of the Congregational order, at Lindfield, Sussex. The Rev. Wm. Aldridge, of East Grinstead,

commenced the service by reading the scriptures and prayer; the Rev. J. Edwards, of Brighton, delivered the introductory discourse; the Rev. J. M. Saule, of Lewes, proposed the questions, and received Mr. C.'s confession of faith; the Rev. J. N. Goulty, of Brighton, offered the ordination prayer; the Rev. Geo. Collison, Mr. C.'s Theological Tutor, gave the charge from 2 Cor. ii. 15. and the Rev. E. Newton, of Cuckfield, closed the morning service with prayer. In the evening the Rev. T. Wallace, of Petworth, addressed the people from John iii. 6. The congregation was large, and the services throughout most solemn and important.

The Rev. W. Blandy, late of Crediton, Devon, has accepted the unanimous call to the pastoral office over the church and congregation, assembling in the Independent Chapel, Sorsby Street, Chesterfield; vacant by the removal of the Rev. J. Horsey, now of Launceston. Mr. B.'s old friends at Crediton, previously to his leaving, presented him with one of the finest copies of Bagster's Comprehensive Bible, splendidly bound in Russia, as a testimony of their affectionate remembrance of his ministry during a residence of more than nine years.

DOCUMENTS

CIRCULAR FROM THE SECRETARY OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF REGISTRATION.

UNDER this general head it is the intention of the Editor to insert those *Public Papers* that relate to the interests of the Church of Christ at large, or that pertain to the religious liberties of our own country. He is happy to commence these archives with copies of Circulars that have been sent to him by J. S. Burn, Esq. Secretary to his Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into the State of Registers or Records, *not being parochial*, of Births, Baptisms, Deaths, Burials, and Marriages. This Commission has originated in the liberal dispositions of his Majesty's Government towards the dissenting community, and their solicitude not only to give them an improved and legalized system of registration for the future, but, if possible, to confer equal authority on such records with those that have been kept by the parochial functionaries. The success of this project, we are aware, must depend on the cordial co-operation of the parties who have such dissenting Registers in their possession, and we, therefore, invite the serious attention of all our readers to the inquiries proposed, and trust that dissenting Ministers, or other representatives of existing or of defunct congregations, will give a prompt attention to the subject, and forward, as instructed, their information to the Home Office at an early period. We are not ignorant of the difficulties which will be found to exist respecting some records, on account of their complex character, one volume having, in some instances, been made to serve the purpose of a church minute-book and of a baptismal register. Where the entries are in distinct parts of the same volume, we would recommend that the register should be detached by a bookbinder, and forwarded with the necessary explanations. In those cases where the entries of baptism, &c. are mixed up with the ordinary proceedings of the church, we should advise that *fac simile* copies be made of them, with the greatest regard to exactness, inserting *numerals* where they are used, and abbreviations where they occur. These *verbatim et literatim* copies should be sent to the Commissioners with the original volume, who, we trust, in such cases will be ready, on ascertaining the *perfect accuracy* of such transcriptions, to receive them and return the original documents.

We beg to urge upon the attention of all our readers, the duty they owe to their families, connections, and the public, to inquire respecting these documents, not a few of which, we fear, are in private hands, and to employ their best influence to secure their immediate transmission to his Majesty's Commissioners.

*Office of the Registration Commission, 22, Downing Street,
2d December, 1836.*

SIR,—The Commissioners who have been appointed by His Majesty to inquire into the state of Registers or Records (not being parochial) of Births, Baptisms, Deaths, Burials, and Marriages, have directed me to transmit to you the inclosed paper of Questions, and to request that you will afford to them, upon the several points, at your earliest convenience, all the information which you may be able to supply.

For the purpose of shewing the benefits that may result from this inquiry, and with the hope also of securing the concurrence and co-operation of all parties interested, the Commissioners have instructed me to state the principal subjects to which their attention will be directed. They will be, as follows:—1st. To inquire into the state, custody, and authenticity of such Records: 2nd. To inquire what measures can be most beneficially adopted for collecting, arranging, depositing, and preserving them,—for giving full force and effect to them as evidence, and for facilitating the production and reception of them, in Courts of Justice. It is evident that the successful accomplishment of these objects will very materially promote the interests of the non-conforming classes of the community.

The information, which is requested in answer to the inclosed Questions, will be necessary for enabling the Commissioners successfully to discharge the trust consigned to them. The Commissioners therefore reckon with confidence upon the assistance of all parties, to whom this communication shall be made known.

The proposed inquiry will extend to the Registers or Records, of the description above-mentioned, belonging to all the nonconformist churches, or congregations, such as the Roman Catholics, the Quakers, the Jews, the Scotch Churches in England, and also the Churches of Foreign Protestants in England. But I am directed to observe, that this Circular Letter is more particularly intended for the Ministers, Officers, and Trustees, or other leading Members, of Protestant Non-Conformist Churches in England and Wales.

The Commissioners are very desirous, for the purpose of obtaining the best information by actual and minute inspection and examination, that all existing original Register Books of Births, Baptisms, Deaths, and Burials, and of Marriages before the passing of the Marriage Act in 1753, should be transmitted to them.

Registers belonging to any Congregation in London or the neighbourhood, may be delivered to me at this Office any day between eleven and two o'clock.

Any Register Book belonging to a Congregation in the Country, not exceeding five pounds weight, may be inclosed in a cover, directed as follows;—

No. 1.

ON HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE.

*The Secretary of State,
Home Department,
Whitehall.*

Registration }
Commission. }

and may be delivered to the nearest Post Office.—Where it exceeds that weight, it may be directed as follows :

ON HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE.

*The Secretary of the
Registration Commission,
22, Downing Street.*

and may be sent (as an ordinary parcel) by the Mail Coach, or other safe Conveyance.

I am further directed to request, that when any register is delivered or transmitted, a certificate or statement should accompany it, according to the inclosed form, to be filled up as far as can be done; and that such certificate should be signed either by the Minister, or by one or two of the Trustees or Church Officers, or by such other person as can supply the information required; in the latter case, the reason why no Minister or Trustee or Church Officer signs, should be stated. The certificate may be annexed to the inside of the cover, or to the first blank page of the book, or of the first or last book of the series, where there are more than one.

The Commissioners will take charge of the registers entrusted to them, and be ready to re-deliver them, if required. But it will be most advisable, that they should not merely be produced for inspection, but that they should remain under the charge of the Commissioners, in order that at the close of the investigation, they may, if the Legislature should so provide, be safely transferred to the custody of the Registrar-General, or to such other depository as may be directed; and also that the most effectual means may be adopted for imparting to them, as documentary evidence, more weight and a fuller legal sanction than they have hitherto received.

To those who may feel objections to the depositing of the dissenting registers in a central public office, I am instructed to observe, that when the general system of registration, appointed by the recent Act, shall come into operation after the 1st of March, 1837, the necessity for keeping registers at the dissenting chapels will cease, and there will consequently be danger of their being lost:—at all events there will be great and increasing difficulty in proving, for legal purposes, that the document produced in a court as a register book, comes from what such court will consider as the proper custody. There appears to be no adequate provision against these inconveniences, except the plan of depositing and arranging the documents in a public office, when the object of their continuance in private custody shall be at an end.

The Commissioners are aware, that some inconvenience may arise from the transmission of registers which are in present use, since the substitute, provided by the late Act for a general registration, will not come into operation till after the 1st of March ensuing. Should any such inconvenience be apprehended, the Commissioners will, if desired, return the register with the least possible delay. This may be done with regard to congregations in London, without difficulty; but, with regard to congregations in the country, the Commissioners would strongly recommend that a new book, of a convenient size, should be prepared for any subsequent entries that may be necessary until the new system of registration shall come into operation,—which supplementary matter may be afterwards transmitted to the proper depository, together with any other books which may have been previously lodged in their office.

You will greatly promote the speedy and effectual discharge of the duty entrusted to the Commissioners, by doing all in your power to make this communication known to your congregation, and also in any quarter from which you think information may be obtained. For this purpose, duplicates of the questions and of the certificate are inclosed, and additional copies may be obtained from this office.

Any letters in reply to this circular, or with reference to the subjects herein mentioned, may be sent by the post, addressed as (prescribed in the first direction on the preceding page.)

I am, Sir, your most obedient servant, JNO. S. BURN, (Secretary.)

Questions referred to in the Circular Letter.

1. Are you or have you been Minister, Trustee, or Member, or Representative of any Minister, Trustee, or Member of any and what Chapel, respecting the Register of which you can give information; or in what way have you been connected with any such? State the name, denomination, and situation of such Chapel.

2. Is the Chapel or the Congregation subsisting? Or if dissolved, when dissolved?

3. Has any Register Book or Books of Births, Baptisms, Deaths, or Burials, or of Marriages before the Marriage Act of 1753, been kept by the Minister or Trustee or other Church Officer of such Chapel, or in connexion with it?

4. State over what period such Register or Registers extend. How many are there?

5. Who is the Minister, who the principal acting Trustees, Deacons, or other Church Officers of the Chapel with which you are connected?

6. In whose custody is such Register Book or Books; and where is it deposited? In whose custody has it *usually* been kept, and where has it been *usually* deposited?

7. If you know of any Register being lost, state the time and occasion of the loss to the best of your information.

8. Will you, or will the party having the custody of any Register, produce it or send it to the Commissioners? By what mode of conveyance will it be sent? If you do not produce or send it, state the reason.

9. If you know of any Register, which is not in your possession, give an account of it, as far as you are able, where it is, and what is the name and address of the person who has it.

10. May any Register sent by you to the Office of the Commissioners, remain in the custody of the Board for the purposes mentioned in the Circular Letter? If you have any objection to its being so deposited, state it.

11. Have you in your custody or power the Register Book (not parochial) of any other Chapel or Burial-ground?

12. Can you give information as to any such Registers in the possession of private persons? Communicate all the information in your power.

Signature of the Person answering the above Questions.

MISCELLANEOUS INTELLIGENCE.

THE LATE REV. DR. MORRISON'S CHINESE LIBRARY.—The late Rev. Dr. Morrison, in the year 1824, brought to England a collection of Chinese books, in every branch of the Literature of that nation, which he had obtained by great perseverance, and at an expense of about £2000.

It consists of about 900 distinct works, occupying (according to the manner of the country), nearly 10,000 volumes, and forming, undoubtedly, the most complete Library of Chinese Literature to be found in Europe.

His design, in bringing this Library to England, was to offer it as a free gift to his country, provided it could be rendered the means of introducing into it the study, and of establishing, in one of its seats of literature, a School for the cultivation of the Chinese language.

Not meeting with encouragement in this primary design, he projected a Society under the title of "The Language Institution," to whose apartments in Bartlett's Buildings the Library was transferred. The object of the Institution was to give instruction to all persons desirous of obtaining a knowledge of the Chinese and other Oriental languages; and gratuitously to such as intended to devote their attainments to the propagation of Christianity. Dr. Morrison himself attended at stated hours, and gave instructions in Chinese to several pupils.

After his return to China, the Institution languished, and at length was closed. The Library, according to the Doctor's directions, was placed under the care of the Trustees, in the house of the London Missionary Society, where it still remains. The Trustees have since made several efforts to dispose of it to the Government and other public bodies, in their own country, but without

success. In the mean time, the attention of the Professor of Chinese in the College of France having been attracted to it, and a catalogue granted, overtures of purchase for the Royal Library of Paris were made, on the communication of which to the Doctor he declared it be his determination that it should not be sent out of England.

In consequence of the death of Dr. Morrison, and the inadequate provision which is found for the support of his widow and seven children,—five under the age of ten years (and one only, his eldest son, provided for), it becomes imperative that this unique collection of Chinese literary productions should be rendered available to the better support of his family, and the education and future establishment of his children. To give effect to this interesting measure, by inviting an extended and liberal Subscription for the purchase of the Library, is the object of the present Address.

It would derogate from the honour of the country, to doubt that a plan, intended to express public esteem for the memory, and benevolent feeling towards the family of a man, whose name—*whether he is regarded as the Founder of the Anglo-Chinese College, the Compiler of his great Chinese and English Dictionary, the chief Translator of the Holy Scriptures into Chinese, or for many years the able servant of the East India Company, as Chinese Translator to their factory at Canton*,—presents so many claims to the esteem of his countrymen, will meet with their cordial support.*

From Dr. Morrison's original intention in bringing this Library to England, it is concluded that a destination of it, which shall render it instrumental in promoting the study of the Chinese language in Great Britain, will erect the best monument to his memory, and accomplish his patriotic desire thereby to confer an important benefit upon his country.

With this view, the friends of the deceased, who have undertaken to conduct the measure now submitted to public attention, beg respectfully to recommend, that, as the Library will be obtained by voluntary donations, the Trustees of the fund shall be authorized to present it, as a gift, to one of the most eminent Literary Institutions of the Metropolis, the Directors of which shall be willing to institute a Professorship of the Chinese Language. The increased interest which recent political events have given to the vast and important regions of the globe, over which that Language and its cognate Dialects prevail, seems to invite Great Britain, at this crisis, to the honour as well as the advantages of adopting a measure which, together with other important results, may yield facilities to the formation of future relations, between the Chinese and British nations.

These views are submitted to the consideration of the public, in the confidence that they will meet with the concurrence and support of Englishmen of all ranks, at home and abroad, who feel it an honour done to their country, when unassuming merit, and disinterested labours, for the good of mankind, meet from it a sure, though it may only be a posthumous reward.

The following gentlemen have consented to become Trustees of the Fund to be raised, until the Library shall be legally conveyed to the Institution which shall accede to the proposed terms:—Sir George Thomas Staunton, Bart.; Samuel Mills, Esq.; William Alers Hankey, Esq.

Donations will be received by the following Bankers; Messrs. Coutts and

* At the Anniversary of the Royal Asiatic Society, May 1835, Sir George Thos. Staunton, Bart., said, "That when he reflected on Dr. Morrison's vast work of a complete Chinese and English Dictionary, and his entire version of the Holy Scriptures into the Chinese language, and the important use of these two great achievements, he could not but think that such a union of Christian zeal and eminent learning, so usefully devoted to the good of mankind, had rarely if ever been exceeded."

The Right Hon. Henry Ellis, at the same meeting, remarked that "He thought that extraordinary individual (Dr. Morrison) deserved some mark of national gratitude."

Co., Strand; Sir Claude Scott, Bart. and Co., Cavendish Square; Messrs. Williams, Deacon, and Co., Birch Lane; Messrs. Hankey and Co., Fenchurch Street.

CAFFRE WAR AND THE WESLEYAN MISSIONARIES.—The lengthened statement on this subject which we prepared from the Parliamentary Papers, and inserted in our Magazine for November, was immediately reprinted in *The Christian Advocate*, *The Manchester Times*, &c. but remained unnoticed for three weeks by *The Watchman Newspaper*, which has been, not unaptly, called *The Conference Gazette*, when at length, instead of inserting the article itself, with an open, manly comment upon it, a leader of more than a column long was inserted about it. We say *about* it—for no vindication of the conduct of the Wesleyan Missionaries in South Africa was attempted, or even an explanation of their very dubious conduct essayed. The worthy Editor only imputes motives and calls names—charging us with being “blinded by the spirit of party”—betraying “indecent haste” in publishing “the real or supposed errors of our Wesleyan brethren”—supplying “abundant evidence that there is a great deal of party spirit and manoeuvre in the whole affair”—with making “a vile attack on the character of the whole Methodist body”—and then, quoting our Saviour’s solemn admonition, about “the mote” and “the beam,” crowns the whole by plainly declaring that “many will think (Dr. Philip) has made himself responsible to an awful extent, for the Caffre blood which the Hottentot soldiers shed during the war.”—We have not space for a full reply to these things, but we shall glance at the most important of them. An eagerness to expose the failings of our brethren would certainly have betrayed an unchristian spirit. But what is the fact? Dr. Bunting and the Wesleyan Missionary Committee knew of Lord Glenelg’s just displeasure in January last. The Parliamentary Papers were ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on the 30th of May—they were in the hands of the public before the close of July—when Mr. Shrewsbury’s sanguinary document and Mr. Boyes’s fawning address to the Governor excited disgust in many intelligent circles. We published our remarks in *November*. So much for our *indecent haste*!

Now we ask, why did not the conduct of Mr. Shrewsbury become the subject of discipline at the Conference in July last? His humanity and uprightness were both impeached, and yet he was appointed to the Rochester circuit, as if nothing had happened. It would have been indelicate to have interfered with the question before the meeting of the Conference, because it would have appeared to anticipate their proceedings, but when that ecclesiastical Divan had convened and separated without any public measures upon a great public question, it was high time for honest and christian journalists to remind all the parties concerned, that there is such a thing in this country as public opinion, and that its voice may even penetrate the chamber of Conference, though its doors should be walled up like those of the conclave at Rome. “Them that sin rebuke *before all*, that others also may fear.” It is curious that Mr. Shrewsbury was not even named by *The Watchman* throughout his article. That was certainly very judicious. Col. Smith, to whom he wrote his hateful letter, has also sadly neglected him, for that gentleman, when addressing the Caffre Chiefs on the 13th of September last, whom Mr. Shrewsbury would have treated like “irreclaimable wolves,” takes no notice of the coercive policy that was so humanely recommended to him, but acknowledges the progress which in a few months they had made in civilization, and the happy influence which a conciliatory policy has wrought on their minds.—*Vide The South African Commercial Advertiser*, Sept. 28.

We are not to be seduced from the *present* question by the “*manœuvres*” of *The Watchman* to excite a discussion of measures of four and twenty years date, but will explicitly reply to his *recriminating* statement, that the evils which befel the Caffres in the late war were mainly inflicted by the Hottentot soldiers, who were called into the field from our missionary stations by Dr. Philip, while “the Moravian missionaries complained of the part which their Hottentots were *compelled* to take in the DEFENCE of the colony, while the missionary of the London

Society volunteers his services to call out his Hottentots, &c." The well-known opinions of the Moravian body respecting war may well explain the reason of their remonstrance. The members of the London Missionary Society never professed such sentiments, but have always regarded defensive warfare to be justifiable. In January, 1835, news reached Cape Town, that the whole colony was threatened by the fierce invasion of the Caffres, a universal panic prevailed—Dr. Philip wrote to the missionary stations, declaring it to be the duty of every Christian "to come forward and defend the lives and properties of his fellow citizens"—and especially urged the Hottentots to do so, on account of their many obligations to the British government. This Dr. Doddridge in effect did, when he raised a company in Northampton to repel the Highland forces of the Pretender, who were advancing from the North. But it is one thing to unite to repel the invasion of an excited and barbarous people, and another, after they are repelled and overcome, to hunt them like beasts, to alienate their country, and to reduce them to the lowest servitude; or to flatter the man who could carry such unchristian and unenglish measures into effect. The readers of *The Watchman*, if they have dared to peruse the article that appeared in our November Magazine, must be shallow persons indeed, if they cannot distinguish between the duty of repelling a desolating invasion, and the barbarous conduct which followed the defeat of the poor and ignorant invaders! We are compelled, through the want of room, to postpone this subject to a future occasion: but enough we think has been said to illustrate the shallow methods by which the *Watchman* seeks to quiet his confiding readers.

A DRAWBACK ON CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA.—A correspondent of *The Central Free Press*, makes the following statement: "There was an order published some time ago abolishing flogging in the Native Army, but on taking my ride this morning, (April 21,) I was not a little surprised to see the 12th regt. N.I. drawn up in square, and the cat-o'-nine tails, in the act of being applied to the back of an unfortunate soldier. On inquiry I learned that he was a country born Christian, employed as a musician in the band, but borne on the rolls and paid as a sepoy. How long is this disgraceful distinction to be kept up? And on what principle of justice are men to be exposed to the lash, merely because they are Christians? I believe many of the native Christians serving in the army, are determined to renounce their religion and become Musselmen; should this distinction be kept up much longer, and as long as they are subjected to this badge of Christianity, who can blame them, if they follow this course?"

How long will the Christian public in Great Britain submit to the employment of Indian law and authority to check the progress of divine truth, in that important empire! Why do not the new Bishops of India fearlessly raise their voices against such cruel distinctions? We ask not for *bounties* upon the profession of Christianity amongst the natives; but we must not submit to such *drawbacks* as this!

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Died at Pentonville, Nov. 21st, after a long illness, the Rev. SAMUEL BURDER, D.D. in the 65th year of his age. This gentleman was ordained at St. Albans, May 3, 1797, as the first pastor of an Independent Church, that had been recently formed in that town; and the Editor of the Evangelical Magazine of that day, in recording the event says, "may he live to nourish the infant church in the word of life, and may the church increase with the increase of God." In 1802 he published the first volume of his *Oriental Customs*, to which in 1807 he added a second, under the same title. In the list of subscribers, occur the names of many leading ministers of the Congregational body, and also several clergymen and a few dignitaries of the Church of England, amongst which that of Dr. S. Barrington, Bishop of Durham, is prominent. Shortly after this publication Mr. Burder resigned his connection with Dissenters, entered Clare Hall, Cam-

bridge, and received Episcopal ordination at the hands of Bishop Barrington about the year 1809. In dedicating "The Scripture Expositor," to that prelate, Mr. Burder says, "is subordinate only to the high consideration, which ought ever to be cherished of the divine approbation, no motive will ever more powerfully influence my conduct, than a desire to fulfil those expectations which your Lordship has been pleased to form and express respecting me!" Whatever pre-ferment Mr. Burder may have anticipated, he never obtained any ecclesiastical benefice; but was allowed by his patron to spend his days in the drudgery of curacies and lectureships, and sink into the infirmities of declining life in poverty and neglect; affording a melancholy example of the very dubious secular advantages to be gained by an act of conformity to the established church.

On Lord's day November 30th, at his residence North Hill, Colchester, the Rev. JOHN SAVILL, aged 56. This gentleman was a native of Bocking, in Essex, and second son of the late Joseph Savill, Esq., banker of that town. He was educated for the ministry amongst Protestant Dissenters, at Homerton College, and entered upon public life in the autumn of 1805, as morning preacher to the English Presbyterian congregation, then assembling at Salters' Hall Meeting House, London. In 1810 he was elected pastor of the Congregational Church, assembling at the Octagon Meeting, Colchester; and was ordained to that office Nov. 22d, in that year. He continued pastor of that important charge till 1828, when he resigned his office and removed to Halstead, in the same county, as successor to the venerable James Bass. Circumstances arose in that church which were painful to Mr. Savill's mind, and he therefore relinquished the care and responsibilities of a pastoral charge, and returned to his mansion at Colchester, where he died. As a preacher he possessed superior talents, and with the address and fortune of a gentleman, it was fondly hoped that his public life would have been eminently useful. Constitutionally prone to depression and melancholy, he was, however, but ill prepared to bear the personal and relative trials with which it pleased God to exercise him. A slight paralytic seizure indicated the existence of latent mischief, without however exciting apprehension of immediate danger. Three or four days before his last fatal seizure he wrote to a friend: "Although I would be thankful for the general good health I enjoy, yet I suffer much in my body from muscular weakness, and in mind from nervous debility. I must say with Job, 'the hand of God has touched me,' and with Job, I would say: 'What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?'" On the Thursday evening previous to his death, we understand that he was seized with paralysis while alone in his summer house engaged in some astronomical observations, and that he lingered in hopeless circumstances to the following sabbath; when his sombre and saddened spirit took its flight to the blessed regions of light and joy, to the deep regrets of his bereaved family, and very extensive circle of friends, but doubtless to his own eternal gain.

On Thursday morning, December 15th, very suddenly, the Rev. SAMUEL SUMMERS, pastor of the ancient Baptist Church and Congregation at Broadmead, Bristol. This lamented gentleman spent the earlier part of his life in secular business, but having evinced unusual talents for the ministry, while fulfilling the duties of the deacon's office in the Baptist church, Devonshire Square, London, he was induced to relinquish trade, and devote himself to the work of the ministry. His peculiar acceptance as a preacher may be inferred from the fact, that he was chosen to succeed to the Rev. Robert Hall. His labours, we have understood, were made very useful, and his death will be deeply deplored by many. There is reason to fear that his laborious preparations for the pulpit increased a disease of the heart, which occasioned his death under circumstances so awfully sudden.

On Saturday, December 17th, in the eighty-sixth year of his age, the Rev. JOHN RIPPON, D.D. for upwards of sixty-three years pastor of the Baptist Church, formerly assembling in Carter Lane, Tooley Street, but now worshipping in an elegant meeting-house, New Park Street, Southwark. Dr. Rippon was a native of Tiverton, Devon, and studied for the ministry at the Bristol Academy,

under Messrs. Hugh and Caleb Evans; and after his preparatory studies and the probationary service of twelve months, he was elected by his late charge to succeed the learned Dr. John Gill in the pastoral office, and was ordained accordingly, November 11th, 1773.

Dr. Rippon first became extensively known to the public by the compilation of "*A Selection of Hymns from the best authors, intended to be an Appendix to Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns,*" which has passed through very numerous editions, and by which he is supposed to have realized considerable property.

This was succeeded by his *Tune Book*, adapted to the preceding.

In 1790 he began *The Baptist Register*, which was continued for several years.

At the commencement of the present century, he projected a *History of Bunhill Fields*, in six octavo volumes, to be embellished with a hundred engravings. But although he received the money of many subscribers, and collected a large mass of MSS. and autographs, yet the work was never executed. He also published several single sermons, delivered on public occasions.

As a preacher, Dr. Rippon was for a long period exceedingly popular, characterized by great vivacity, fervour, quaintness, and point; his discourses were very acceptable to the multitude.

For several years past the infirmities of advancing life have prevented the fulfilment of his pastoral duties, and the Rev. Charles Room was elected his co-pastor. The latter gentleman officiated at the funeral which took place at Bunhill Fields, on the 24th of December, and Dr. Collyer, of Peckam, preached the funeral sermon on the Lord's-day following at New Park Street, to a crowded auditory.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS, &c.

The Editor presents his grateful acknowledgments to the following ministers and gentlemen, from whom he has received various papers during the past month—to the Rev. Drs. Henderson—Urwick—and Matheson—to the Rev. Messrs. A. Wells—J. Thornton—Joseph Morison—W. Davis—J. Medway—E. Newton—Alfred Pope—Wm. Moorhouse—Thomas Milner—John Whitridge—T. C. Everett—Samuel M'All—G. B. Kidd—A. Tidman—C. N. Davies—and Professor Hoppus—and to Messrs. W. A. Hankey—J. Risden Bennett, M.D.—Hull Terrell—and W. Robinson.

The Editor exceedingly regrets that several of these valued communications came to hand too late for insertion in the present number, particularly the valued letters of Drs. Matheson and Urwick, which were prepared with a view to the commencement of the New Series.

In reply to Mr. M'All, the Editor wishes to state, that he was surprised at the remarks in his letter, not being aware of any paragraph in the article referred to that could give offence to any parties. On reading the exceptionable passage, he confesses he was ignorant of the circumstances to which it alludes, and should not have been able to explain it without the key which Mr. M'All supplies. The Editor cannot hesitate for a moment to express his regret that the gentleman who wrote the article should have made it the medium of a covert attack upon any of his brethren; but as the offensive remarks are so concealed that only the parties involved will understand them, he thinks it better that no further notice should be taken of them. At all events, he does not wish the discussion of such a question in the pages of the *New Series* of the Congregational Magazine. The Editor will be happy to hear from his northern brethren on some more agreeable topics.

In preparing the present Number, the Editor has been anxious to supply his readers with an average specimen of the work, and he trusts, by the able co-operation of his many gifted correspondents, to increase the interest, the influence, and usefulness of the only Magazine that is avowedly devoted to the welfare of the English Congregational Churches. Is it too much in return to request the best efforts of our readers to extend the circulation of this Periodical?